New Statesman

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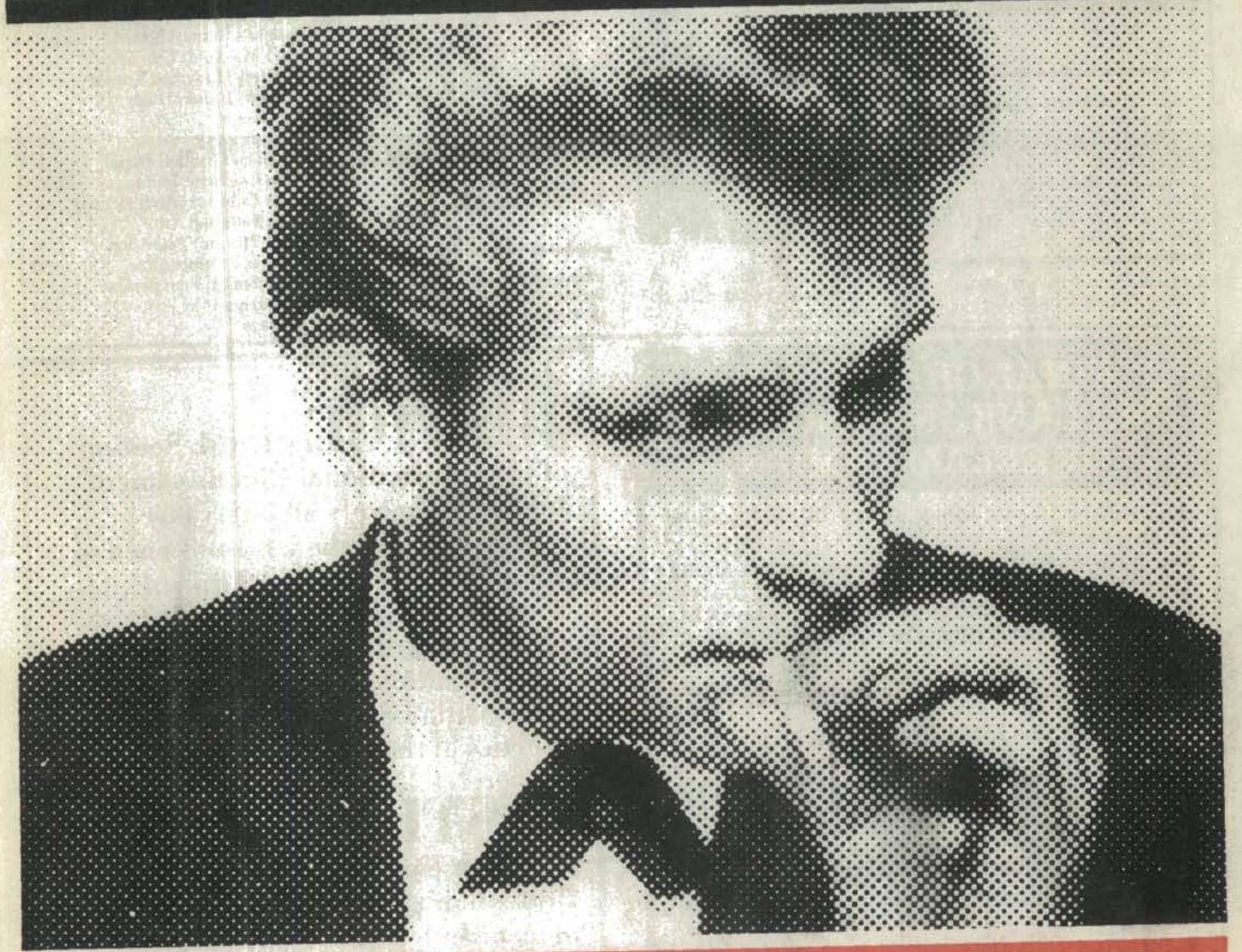
The future of socialism: the debate begins

MURDERER?



OR VICTIM?

The case of Paul Cleeland

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New Statesman

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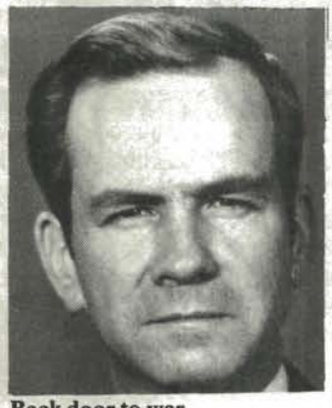

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New Statesman

Vol 106 No 2733 5 August 1983

A child is being beaten

TO THE FRENCH, flagellation is *le vice anglais*. It is an insult which the English seem happy to treat as a compliment. For many people in this country, spanking and flogging are, like the royal family, cherished national institutions which must be maintained and celebrated. In a report published this week the pressure group STOPP (Society of Teachers Opposed to Physical Punishment) estimates that 238,688 beatings are given to children in primary and secondary schools every year. And those are only the *recorded* punishments; if informal slaps and whacks are included, STOPP believes that the number runs into millions.

However, although Mr Squeers's descendants are caning with all their customary vigour, life is becoming more difficult for them. Early last year the European Court of Human Rights ruled that schoolchildren should not be beaten if their parents objected to it. The judgment was binding on the United Kingdom, and it was followed by some impressive changes of heart. The teaching unions, which had previously been loud supporters of the philosophy of 'spare the rod and spoil the child', have suddenly accepted that perhaps beating is not an essential part of the curriculum after all, and that 'classroom discipline' can be maintained without the use of sudden acts of violence against children.

And then, last week, the British government produced its reply to the European judgment. In future, schools will contain two types of pupil: those who can still be flogged, and those whose bodies will become 'cane-free zones' because their parents disapprove of the punishment. It would be hard to imagine a more preposterous and unworkable solution. Why did Sir Keith Joseph not simply abolish corporal punishment altogether, given that the European Court of Human Rights is bound to declare it illegal in a year or two anyway?

The answer is that flagellomania is deeply embedded in the national psyche. In his remarkable book *The English Vice* (Duckworth, 1978), Ian Gibson produced a wealth of evidence to show how important a part flogging has played in the history of this country. Since Sir Keith Joseph has said that history teaching in schools should inculcate a sense of 'national values', it is small wonder that he cannot bear to see the extinction of this most enduring of British values. If it had not been for last year's European ruling, Sir Keith and the teaching unions would not have moved as far as they have already; and we shall need another judgment from Europe before corporal punishment is finally expunged from our schools.

But that will not be the end of the story. There are many liberal-minded parents who are opposed to beating in schools but who still beat their children at home. Yet if children should not be beaten by people who are *in loco parentis*, nor should they be beaten by their actual parents. Several years ago Sweden introduced a law forbidding parents to hit their children. Any suggestion of a similar law over here would unquestionably be denounced as an intolerable interference with the rights of parents. Such is the warped nature of Britain that it is illegal for adults to assault other adults, but adults who hit their own children can do so with the law's blessing. So long as that remains the case, this country can hardly presume to lecture anyone else on the merits of civilisation. □

The rate of democracy

Britain's rating system is this government's Achilles Heel. In 1979 the Conservative manifesto promised radical reform of the cumbersome, inefficient and unfair system of levying an income for local authorities. It has now finally accepted that it is incapable of introducing reform. That is the first obvious conclusion of Patrick Jenkin's White Paper on rates, published last Monday. The second is that local authority spending – and revenue raising – has forced the government into the position when it must sacrifice one or other of its two main policy planks: it must either allow public spending to rise 'uncontrollably', or it must exercise a degree of control over the economy which is anathema to Conservative notions of the role of central government. It has chosen the latter.

Typically, Patrick Jenkin tried to present the choice as an act of Tory democracy. Central government cannot, he said, 'ignore the deep sense of grievance felt by many domestic and non-domestic ratepayers about excessive expenditure and rate levels'. (The government can, however, as Mrs Thatcher made quite clear last Friday, ignore any deep sense of grievance among taxpayers who had been wrongly led to believe that a Conservative government would reduce taxes.) In fact, as Mr Jenkin's department said, central government was merely going about 'their task of managing the economy'.

Labour local authorities, the last economic and political organisations to take a stand against the present government's economic policy, are now faced with the familiar task of defending systems which are not only inefficient, but highly unpopular as well. Local democracy does depend on local revenue and it is hard to defend the former without defending the latter. As Labour councillors meet to decide how to defend their rights against central government, they should also recognise that the present rating system will have to be reformed, if they are to get the popular support that they need for their political battle. □

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Germany helps Brazil to nuclear supremacy

A WEST GERMAN research institute is supplying Brazil with rocket and missile technology suitable for the construction of ballistic nuclear missiles, according to a Berlin-based scientific research group.

In a study released last month, the 'Working Group on Physics and Weapons'* says that the German Aeronautical Research and Testing Laboratory, in Köln, has transferred important elements of missile technology to Brazil without safeguards against military use. By 1987, when Brazil's nuclear capability is likely to have advanced sufficiently to construct atomic weapons, military chiefs also expect to have a rocket launcher in operation – which, used as a ballistic missile, could carry a nuclear warhead over a range of more than 1,000 miles.

In a statement issued from Bonn on Tuesday, the German Foreign Ministry acknowledged a 12-year-old collaborative agreement on rocket research with Brazil. But a spokesman claimed that there was 'no German input, be it material or technical' in the Brazilian Rocket Launcher Development Project called Sonda. However, this claim is contradicted by details of research projects issued by the West German Research and Technology Ministry in 1981.

If successful, the developments would establish Brazil as the regional superpower, overshadowing Argentina in the race for Latin American nuclear supremacy. The effect on worldwide nuclear weapons proliferation control would be fatal, since at present South America is the world's major nuclear-weapons-free zone, established by treaty.

Brazil, with Argentina and Pakistan, leads the list of 'near-nuclear' nations. Collaborative nuclear links between West Germany and Brazil have already received widespread international criticism.

In June 1975, the two countries signed a unique and unprecedented 15-year pact to collaborate 'in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy'. The deal provides Brazil with self-sufficiency in critical elements of nuclear technology. Brazil, like Argentina, has refused to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and is not bound by the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which prescribes the nuclear-weapons-free zone in Latin America.

Since 1971, the German aeronautical laboratory, the DFVLR, has cooperated with the Brazilian Aerospace Technical Centre (CTA) to produce a series of 'sounding' rockets of increasing power and range. The latest, the Sonda IV, can carry a payload of 300 kilograms to an altitude of 1,000 kilometres. The rocket is being developed at the CTA research centre, located at Sao José dos Campos, near Sao Paulo. The centre accommodates a number of separate research and development institutes. The military Institute for Space Activities is developing the Sonda rockets, while the civilian Institute of Space Research is developing surveillance and communications satellites. The Brazilians have their own missile and rocket test and launching site at Barreiro do Inferno, on the Atlantic coast near Recife.

According to the Director of the Space Research Institute, Sr Nelson de Jesus Párada, the rocket development programme is primarily for military purposes. He told *New Scientist* journalist Peter Marsh at the United Nations world summit on space, in Vienna last August, that: 'The institute . . . is working on the solid propellant rocket primarily to carry warheads . . .' Marsh says there was no doubt that Sr Párada was referring to ballistic missiles rather than anti-aircraft or tactical weapons.

The Sao José research centre is also the home of Brazil's atomic weapons development programme, a leading Brazilian physicist reported last year, at the annual conference of the Brazilian Society for Progress and Science.

The Sonda rockets have ostensibly been developed for high altitude 'sounding' research, and cannot immediately be converted to missiles. A navigation and guidance system of high accuracy is needed. But these too can be developed, under the 'civil' guise, for satellite launchers. West German engineers have assisted the Brazilians in developing control and tracking systems for the rockets and their payloads, and seminars and symposia on rocket engineering have been held in Brazil almost every year.

Despite the official German claim that the joint seminars only concerned general principles of rocket technology, the DFVLR's own publication shows that, as recently as 1981, German scientists prepared reports on the 'flight dynamic evaluation of the Sonda IV launcher, covering such topics as 'separation of modules' and 'impact dispersion'.

The Berlin 'Physics and weapons' group, who have been researching the Brazilian link for two years, have called for the termination of the contracts between Germany and Brazil until Brazil signs and ratifies the Non-proliferation and Tlatelolco treaties. The German Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday that 'we are of the strong opinion that Brazil is using (these rockets) only for peaceful purposes'. 'But Sonda is genuine Brazilian with no input from our side,' they claimed.

Duncan Campbell

**Die Bundesrepublik als Heimlicher Waffenexporter – Working Group on Physics and Weapons, Karlsruherstr. 4, 1000 Berlin 31.*

Asbestos curbs undermined

A CONFIDENTIAL REPORT has accused the Health and Safety Executive of undermining controls on asbestos and urges the withdrawal of a 'guidance note' issued only two months ago. The report, by the HSE's Scotland director Stephen Grant, says that thousands of workers in the asbestos industry are still exposed to danger and that the permissible levels of asbestos dust may have to be five times tougher than the present limits.

The guidance note admits that *any* level of detectable asbestos dust is not safe, but sets a 'control limit' for white asbestos – the commonest form in Britain – of two fibres per millilitre of air. The control limit flatly contradicts the statutory obligations under the Asbestos Regulations of 1969, says Grant. These oblige an employer to reduce *any* injurious level of dust. 'It is not within the spirit or the letter of the law to put forward a control limit which is at one and the same time said not to be "safe" but nevertheless "permitted",' says the report.

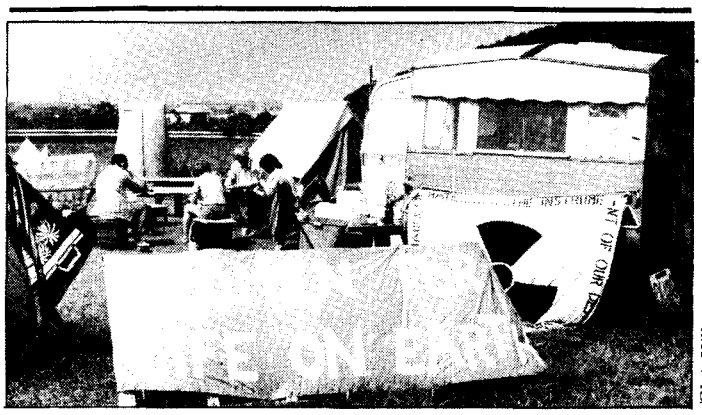
Grant claims that factory inspectors feel unable to prosecute firms which are avoidably exposing workers to levels of dust which, though harmful, are below the control limit, and suggests that an 'action level' of 0.2 fibres per millilitre may be needed to protect workers effectively. 'This would give the industry and the inspectorate a correct objective instead of a spurious one,' the report says.

Health and Safety Commission chairman Bill Simpson has responded testily to the report in a letter to Grant: 'I do not believe that the HSE's current enforcement policy is based on a spurious objective, and would be most concerned if that sort of view gained currency,' he wrote. 'I am concerned that this recommendation should call into question not only the Advisory Committee on Asbestos approach to asbestos, but also the approach that the HSE has been adopting in enforcement over the past number of years.'

Simpson accused Grant of exceeding his brief, and asked him to redraft his report omitting the controversial recommendations. But after Grant refused and threatened to resign, the HSE changed tack and now says the report will be published later this month.

Grant's attack on government policy was reinforced last week by the publication of a report by doctors Acheson and Gardner of the Medical Research Council which calls for a blanket ban on the import of brown and blue asbestos, and for the progressive replacement of white asbestos as substitutes become available. Their report confirms a linear relation between lung cancer and exposure to asbestos.

Sean Cahill



Chris Hill

Rosyth women's peace camp

The women's peace camp outside the Rosyth naval base in Scotland – where Polaris submarines are refitted – has been established for over two months (since 22 May 1983), but as peace camps are out of fashion in the media, it has received very little publicity. The women have organised one non-violent action during a recent naval open day which resulted in one arrest, and more actions are planned. The area in which they are camped is known as Limpetness, which is appropriate, according to one of the women, as limpets are very hard to remove.

Rob Edwards

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Battered women rejected

TWO THIRDS of the women seeking refuge with Women's Aid in Scotland last year had to be turned away due to lack of room. Altogether 1,659 women fleeing domestic violence – 80 per cent more than the previous year – were forced to stay with friends or relatives or to return to a violent relationship.

These figures probably underestimate the scale of the problem as there are areas of Scotland without any refuges at all. In 1975 the Select Committee on Violence in the Family recommended that as an initial target there should be 500 refuge places for battered women in Scotland. There are currently just 105 places in 30 Women's Aid refuges.

The huge increase in the number of women seeking help over recent years is frequently attributed to the steep rise in male unemployment. Scottish Women's Aid are anxious to dispute this, arguing that increased publicity and sexual stereotyping may be more important reasons.

The organisation is also bitterly disappointed at the effect of the Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act which has been in force for almost a year. The intention of the Act was to give women greater protection against domestic violence by giving them the right to occupy the home and to obtain 'exclusion orders' keeping the violent man out of the house, even if he is the owner or tenant.

But, say Scottish Women's Aid, the Act is being interpreted in a 'restrictive, outdated and dehumanising way', apparently giving greater weight to the property rights of violent men than the well-being of battered women and their children. Some local authorities are said to be unwilling to accept the Act.

Meanwhile the Scottish Office has decided to publish within a month or so a major study on the handling of sexual assault cases carried out by researchers in the Scottish Home and Health Department. Publication of the report, the draft of which is known to be very critical of the police, has been inexplicably delayed for several months.

Rob Edwards

Sinn Fein seeks Labour backing

LAST WEEK'S visit to London by Sinn Fein MP Gerry Adams signalled Sinn Fein's new strategy of building links with the Labour Party and campaigning to change its policies in favour of British withdrawal from Northern Ireland. The trip was a prelude to Adams's proposed visit to the Labour Party conference in September.

Speaking at the only public venue of his two-day visit, Adams said the 'acid test' of socialist commitment in Britain was support for 'the right of Irish people to self-determination'. Sharing the platform in Finsbury Town Hall, Islington, with GLC leader Ken Livingstone, Belfast Sinn Fein chief Joe Austin and two Islington MPs Jeremy Corbyn and Chris Smith, Adams said: 'In Britain you cannot be a socialist if you condone the colonial stranglehold the British government maintains over our country.'

Adams was warmly supported by the 250-strong audience, but Chris Smith was remorselessly barracked as he tried to dissociate himself from support for IRA violence. Adams later came to his defence. 'Sinn Fein isn't asking British people to support the IRA,' he said. 'All we're asking is for them to support the right to national self-determination.'

The meeting came at the end of two days of private talks with Tony Benn, a small number of MPs in the House of Commons and a group of GLC councillors, one of whom, Steve Bundred, was responsible for arranging the visit. He described building support for withdrawal as 'a hard slog, but this dialogue makes it easier for other people in the party to join in campaigns. We will get there because there is a strong base of support'.

Kevin Toolis

MISCELLANY

Musical chairs

Sir Peter Parker leaves British Rail in September, but there is still no announcement about his replacement. Deep Sleeper (our source in the signal box) says the transport secretary Tom King had a short-list of two and a half potential chairmen drawn up; the names on it were those of Bob Reid, who is BR's chief executive, and Norman Payne, chairman of the British Airports Authority. And the half? That was Sir Peter Baldwin, the former chief civil servant at the Department of Transport, who would have been only a part-time chairman. However, the Cabinet Office rejected the whole jingbang lot of them, so the Department of Transport now has to start all over again and draw up a new short-list.

War wounds

The Independent Broadcasting Authority's latest annual report includes an extraordinary outburst against the Channel 4 programme *The Friday Alternative*, and in particular its edition which analysed media coverage of the Falklands War. The programme 'fell short of what the Authority regards as normal professional journalistic standards'. Staff at *The Friday Alternative* are surprised and hurt by this attack. Their Falklands edition, which was transmitted in February, showed how television news programmes had effectively censored themselves during the war; not surprisingly, the BBC and ITN replied with long letters of complaint. However, the makers of *The Friday Alternative* answered every one of the objections made by the two companies, and showed that the programme was factually sound. Yet now, without warning, the IBA gives *The Friday Alternative* a public birching and says that it must learn to make programmes 'of acceptable quality'. If you want to know what the IBA means by 'acceptable quality', turn on your telly one morning soon and watch TV-am.

Screen gem

The nuclear industry is obviously desperate. Reeling from the public-

ity given to its treatment of nuclear dissidents, it has just released an exciting new 20-minute film called *I Work in Atomic Energy*. Explicitly designed to improve the industry's bad public image and to show that employees are not 'nuclear priests in white coats', the film is bound to become a classic. According to last week's press release from the UK Atomic Energy Authority: 'There is Susan Matthews, a mechanical engineer who rides a motorbike, plays squash and is keen on problem-solving. Alan Kershaw, a senior technician, cycles to work at Winfrith through the Dorset lanes, spends the day working in post-irradiation examination of nuclear fuel, and goes home to play E flat bass in the Wareham Town Band.' *Plague of the Zombies* seems tame by comparison.

Rough sailing

On Tuesday last week a *New Statesman* reader, Harry Haines, was going for a peaceful sail across Lyme Bay in his small yacht. Having seen several Royal Navy ships in the area and heard a certain amount of firing, he assumed that some kind of exercise was taking place. When he was 15 miles east of Dartmouth, he had his suspicions dramatically confirmed: a very large greyish-black missile came whistling past his boat, heading due north. Mr Haines doesn't know exactly how high the missile was flying, but he does know that it was 'too low for comfort – it was very close to the stern of the boat'. He used his radio to ask Brixham coastguards if they knew anything about it: some time later they replied that it had indeed been a missile. (The type was not specified.) Mr Haines says, with impressive understatement, that he was rather 'taken aback' by the whole episode. He was also slightly unhorsed by the coastguard's comment: 'Well, thank God it was one of ours.'

Nuclear reaction

SCRAM – the Scottish Campaign to Resist the Atomic Menace – has produced a rather unflattering portrait of Sir Walter Marshall, chairman of the Central Electricity Generating Board and every anti-nuclear campaigner's pet hate. Designed as a postcard, it shows the man's dome-shaped pate and unblinking eyes looming over a nuclear reactor in the place where the circular containment building would normally be. This is described as a 'Pressurised Walter Reactor' and is sold as a 'postwally' (80p for 10 from 11 Forth Street, Edinburgh – 'Can be burnt as a small-scale effigy in ashtrays and has 1001 useful possibilities'). SCRAM's sales talk must have been irresistible. A letter arrived from Sir Walter Marshall's private secretary: 'With regard to your advertisement in the SCRAM Journal entitled "Postwallys now in stock", Sir Walter would very much like six postcards to keep as souvenirs. He may order more later.'

Museum piece

On Monday evening the British Museum threw a party for all the delegates attending the conference of the International Council of Museums. Showing its usual diplomatic tact, the BM held the reception in the museum's Duveen Gallery – where the Elgin Marbles are kept. But the Greek delegates exacted a swift revenge: the following day the conference passed a motion which supported the principle of having the marbles returned to Athens.

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BR may sell commuter line

A PRIVATE company is negotiating to buy the Windsor to Slough branch line from British Rail. This is the first time that there has been any serious proposal to privatise part of the railways (as distinct from subsidiaries such as hotels).

The company is a firm called Rail Ltd. Its share capital is £1,000, of which just two shares have been issued. The man behind the company is Simon Neave, who is a Thames Television reporter. British Rail confirmed to the *New Statesman* that Rail Ltd had approached BR about buying the line and said that it was giving the proposal 'serious consideration'. Mr Neave denies that he has had any contact with British Rail.

The Windsor to Slough branch line is quite busy, with 42 trains a day, carrying 1,200 passengers. It is not one of BR's serious loss makers. It costs about £160,000 a year to run, and made a small loss in 1982 of £2,000.

Rail Ltd has already had exploratory meetings with British Rail, and Rail Ltd has been asked to provide details of its financial backing and management ability. BR has taken legal advice about the sale, because it does not want to be lumbered with the line if private management fails. The legal advice is that BR would have to apply formally to close the line before it could hand it over to a private company.

Most of the passengers use the line to commute to London, changing to mainline trains at Slough. Any proposal to close the line would certainly provoke considerable public opposition. Running a busy commuter line is very different from running a tourist railway with steam engines, and almost all of Britain's private railways only run during the summer.

Rail Ltd was set up in 1982 to 'carry on the business of running railways'. Neave is both company secretary and a director. (The only other director is Roy Anderson, a systems analyst from Oxford.) Neave has previously been involved with a group called 'Railway Rescue'. This was active about six years ago in arguing that British Rail was overstaffed.

Mick Hamer

Unwanted office blocks go ahead

THE HIGH COURT has thrown out an attempt to block office development proposals for the prime Coin Street site on London's South Bank by the GLC, local community groups and Southwark and Lambeth councils. As the government continues to connive in the parcelling off of the remaining major riverside sites in London for office mega-blocks, Mr Justice Stephen Brown ruled that in the case of this £150 million scheme: 'I do not consider that an assessment of the amount of offices needed was a material consideration in relation to this particular application.'

The objectors, who intend to appeal, argued that a decision by Environment Minister Tom King to grant planning permission for the 'overbearing' wall of offices and shops to Greycoat Commercial Estates, failed to have just regard for statutory plans for the area. King had accepted the decision of his predecessor Michael Heseltine to reject two public inquiries which concluded that the scheme was a 'major overdevelopment of the site', which lies just to the east of the National Theatre.

The judgement sets a rather disturbing precedent for planners. If the size and use of a development are not material planning considerations, then what are?

Coin Street has been London's cause célèbre for community groups taking on developers. In this case the Association of Waterloo Groups had succeeded in gaining planning permission for its own low-key proposals, that emphasised housing and light industry. But only Greycoat was in a position to buy the land. The GLC still hopes that the developers will fall foul of planned road closures. If these are not obtained by April 1984 the GLC can pull out of the land deal agreed by the previous Tory administration.

Last week's ruling came only weeks after a remarkable decision by the newly-installed Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin, which gave his department's blessing to 2½ million sq ft of offices at Hays Wharf next to London Bridge. The developer, the Kuwaiti-owned St Martin Property Company, had an earlier application for a comparable scheme rejected by a public inquiry inspector last year.

Heseltine came forward with a compromise that effectively allowed half of the proposed office development to go ahead. But St Martin sat tight. The London Docklands Development Corporation had taken over planning control for the area that included Hays Wharf and it approached the DoE for a Special Development Order which allows the Environment Secretary to ignore the planning system. Jenkin lost no time in giving the go-ahead, despite the fact that the designs for what Jenkin himself described as 'one of the capital's last major central sites' have never even been made public.

According to the North Southwark Community Development Group and the Joint Docklands Action Group, the Anchor Brewery site east of Tower Bridge will be next.

Neal Morris

Lowest paid robbed of £30m

LATEST FIGURES from the Department of Employment confirm that there is a greater need than ever for Wages Councils, which are supposed to protect 2.75 million of this country's lowest-paid workers. Employers were breaking the law in 27 per cent of the sites inspected last year, and the Wages Inspectorate ordered the payment of £1.9 million in back pay to over 20,000 workers.

Because the Conservatives have run down the number of Inspectors by 30 per cent since 1979, they were able to investigate only 7 per cent of employers covered by Wages Councils (and one-sixth of these 'inspections' only involved checking returned questionnaires). If employers who were not inspected were underpaying their employees to the same extent, the low-paid lost at least £30 million in 1982.

In February this year Employment Minister Norman Tebbit expressed 'serious misgivings about the perpetuation of minimum wage-fixing machinery', and the government is known to be sympathetic to the right-wing argument that such machinery raises wages to an artificially high level and thereby creates unemployment.

But before abolishing the Wages Councils, the government must go through the lengthy process of denouncing International Labour Organisation convention 26, established in 1928. It will have to declare its intention to do so by June 1985 before it can actually abolish the Wages Councils in 1986. This gives the unions enough time to work out a coherent policy on low pay.

In the past some unions have seen Wages Councils as an interference with 'free' collective bargaining and a barrier to union organisation. But there is no evidence that where Wages Councils have been abolished union organisation has increased – many of the causes of low pay are also the structural obstacles to organised labour: small firms, widespread subcontracting, homeworking and the characteristics of the workforce itself (three-quarters of those covered by Wages Councils are women).

A national minimum wage, recognising that low pay also exists in industries not covered by the Wages Councils, would be the best way of tackling the problem. The General, Municipal and Boilermakers Union adopted the policy at its conference in April – an important breakthrough in trade union policy-making. The GMB is the third big union to join the campaign for a minimum wage, along with NUPE and the civil service union CPSA.

Ironically, if Tebbit abolishes the Wages Councils he would remove the option of strengthening and reforming them (backed by the TGWU) and leave the field clear for a future Labour government, committed to ending low pay, to introduce a national minimum wage.

Steve Keevash

Asian mother denied aid

AN ILLITERATE ASIAN woman who can barely speak a word of English may find herself alone in court to fight a complex wardship hearing for her four young children. She has twice been refused legal aid for a solicitor to represent her, and told to conduct the case herself.

Not only has the Law Society, which administers the legal aid system, issued the decrees in full knowledge of her poor command of English, but the refusals have been for contradictory reasons.

Mrs S first applied for legal aid in 1981 when her local council, Waltham Forest, took her children – all then under five years old – into care under emergency procedures. She had just returned from a visit to India, and both she and the children had been bitten by insects on the leg. Waltham Forest social services claimed this as evidence of ill-treatment to the children.

Mrs S applied for legal aid to get a ward of court order that would return her children to her, with a supervision right granted to the council. Both the legal aid and the ward of court order were immediately forthcoming.

But when in March this year she again applied for legal aid to have the wardship order lifted, the Law Society refused, claiming that since the council had indicated it would agree to de-wardship, Mrs S could conduct the case herself. In fact, Waltham Forest social services had merely indicated it would not oppose the application, but added that its report to the judge would be 'contentious'.

Mrs S's solicitor immediately appealed. On 4 July the Law Society's general appeal committee rejected the plea noting in a one-line explanation that Mrs S had not shown 'reasonable grounds' for the 'de-warding' of her children.

Her solicitor, Ms Roberta Tish, claims this is an example of Law Society double-think: 'What it means is that first she is capable of conducting her own case because the de-warding is not going to be opposed, and second that she doesn't deserve legal aid because the de-warding may not go ahead.'

The Law Society refuses to discuss her case, as Section 22 of the Legal Aid Act swears them to secrecy. Legal Aid area 13 secretary Mr Wyn Wilson declined to discuss the case, but suggested that the appeal committee's decision indicated they didn't necessarily think Mrs S could defend herself in court. He suggested making a fresh application for legal aid.

Tim Tate

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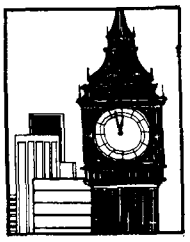

BERNARD CRICK, Guest Columnist

Climbing the socialist mountain

PWLLHELI is not true Kinnock territory: too much Welsh spoken in the shops and too many Plaid slogans on the walls. But on the beach are the people whom Labour has got to win if it is ever to become a national political party again. One doesn't have to give Peter Kellner a holiday to recall that, among skilled working class voters (those on whom the historic Labour Party was built, and who can still afford holidays at Pwllheli), only 32 per cent voted for Labour on the ever memorable 9 June, whereas 40 per cent went Conservative and – just as worrying – 26 per cent Alliance. So it is not the locals that matter but the people on the beach, which gives me a momentary hope of being able to talk to Hattersley and Kinnock as they come paddling down the strand from opposite directions, radiating affability and netting renegade trade unionists. But no such luck, so back to the mountains to look down on it all and think.

This week I want to think about what is the fundamental problem, next week about what kind of politics the Labour Party should pursue to build itself up again, and lastly, to ask what popular images should democratic socialists project of the society they would like to see – eventually if we ever have the sense and patience to rebuild our base camp and climb high again.

As with Ireland, the problem is what is the question? Simplistic answers abound, such as 'winning the next election' or 'keeping the party together'. The next election could be won by stealing the Alliance's clothes but then the Party would finally fall apart; or the Party could hold together in a happy unison of Bevanite revivalism and humanistic marxism and never win a general election again. Some former ministers might not regret the former and some party activists not regret the latter – those who came in during the 1970s with basically a Students' Union experience behind them of politics as the street-theatre oppositionist righteousness.

Counting on the other side to produce one's victory doesn't work either: the proof was massive. With the opposition vote so split, the Tories returned with such a majority of seats and – fair to say – more or less held on to their vote. It is not a nice world. People in jobs are more worried about inflation than about the unemployment of others. And they are highly receptive to the popular press's flattering description of themselves as better people, the sturdy individualists who have jobs, rather than the scroungers, the fiddlers, the lay-abouts, all those too lazy to mount Mr Tebbit's father's magic bicycle – 'the unemployed' of the *Sun*, the *Mail* and the *Express*.

Four things at least should sink into the minds of active Labour Party members before Parliament returns from warmer beaches. First, the whole pattern of post-war political behaviour by which governments were immediately punished following quite imperceptible increases in unemployment is now busted. Perhaps a crisis so deep creates individual fear not fraternity, aggro not altruism. Second, in any case the unemployed themselves did not vote massively for Labour. Third, that the Labour Party is unpopular among those it most seeks to help – unpopular for, if one must rub the salt in for those who still haven't noticed the wounds, Wilson's record in office, its self-centred quarrelling while in opposition, its lack of *national* leadership and (alas, the evidence of opinion surveys is quite clear) for its Programme. And fourth, social structure has changed: there were always working classes, but (*pace* Eric Hobsbawm's argument against Edward Thompson) there was only *a* working class from the 1890s. Since the 1940s we have seen the steady decline of the sociological unity of a broad, national class of primary producers who shared broadly similar life-styles and attitudes and who could be appealed to and moved in a collective way.

Poverty, discrimination, intolerable differentials of health and mortality, and the conceit and constraint of class still continue – in some ways worsen; but in very varying kind and manner both by regions and occupations. Few general slogans can now rally the working classes, even if people sometimes yearn for them – which has been part of Thatcher's success with her popular or populist ideology: politics has become more specific.

IN FACT a large section of the working class now seems to be dropping out of the polity altogether, the four to five million unemployed themselves: they vote far less, are cynical about the political parties and no one else, National Front or Communist Party, succeeds in organising them on any scale (a pity, since only that sort of threat would frighten the government into positive employment policies). To the government, their votes are dispensible; to the Labour Party, they are a sacred cause but a human disappointment; and to the unions, a threat and an embarrassment.

For all these reasons I cannot take seriously the *Tribune's* line that the main cause of defeat was lack of socialist sincerity and belief in the Programme by the leaders. To be fair to the Programme (which heaven knows was no piece of systematic socialism but a pathetic, almost American-style banging together of planks for everyone – in the party – into a platform), popular dislike of it was probably not for the detail but its obvious unrealism. How was it to be paid for? Wouldn't it create inflation again on the scale of Labour's last time in government? And far higher taxes for skilled workers still in jobs? Did they really think that all that could be done in one Parliament?

The main problem is surely for a truly and toughly socialist party to drop the romantic delusion that socialism is or would be immediately popular with *the* working class and to consider what the country really is like and what it wants. Can socialist theory guide us? It can if we go back to its roots as a theory of wages, production and work. The country wants to be back at work again. Even within the Conservative Party a massive split is latent between, not so much 'wets' and 'drys', but industry and the City.

Jimmy Maxton once said of socialist leadership that a man who couldn't ride two horses at once doesn't deserve a job in the bloody circus. A new leader could ride both what-the-party-wants and what-the-public-wants if he made productivity and wealth creation the centre of Labour's attack: not welfare as such but putting people back to work – 'jobs not dole'. A *democratic* socialism can only rise from a capitalist base. First catch the rabbit, but it now needs fattening before it can be cooked and shared equally. All else is internalised fantasy: we need neither 'student socialism' nor Labourism but a socialist realism. □

Peter Kellner is on holiday.

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Is justice also deaf?

A senior barrister has spoken of 'a quite unusual number of blemishes in connection with the police evidence', yet Paul Cleeland, who is serving a 20-year sentence for murder, cannot get a retrial. Simon North reports

IN THE EARLY hours of 5 November, 1972, Terry Clarke, a small-time criminal from Stevenage, was shot dead at close range with a shotgun in the cul de sac behind his house. The killer ambushed him as he returned from a night out with his wife, fired two shots as Clarke stepped out of his car and ran off.

Seven months later, on 25 June 1973, Paul Cleeland, a painter and decorator from Stevenage, was found guilty of murdering Clarke, an associate of his. He was sentenced to a minimum of 20 years' imprisonment. There are many reasons for believing that Cleeland is innocent; that some of the evidence on which he was convicted was very inadequate; that the Home Office has deliberately blocked his efforts to obtain a retrial, including going to the lengths of tampering with his prison records; and that drugs have been illegally administered to him in prison in order to create the impression that he is mentally unstable. Cleeland's efforts to clear his name have been supported by Shirley Williams, who has remained committed to his case even after she ceased being MP for Stevenage, and by Bowen Wells, his current MP.

Cleeland himself believes that, in the first place, the police arrested him in the hope that he would give them information about a criminal drugs gang whom the police believed to be actually responsible for killing Clarke. Cleeland was a known petty criminal. However, he refused to talk, fearing retribution. The police stepped up the pressure. Evidence linking Cleeland with a gun and the gun with Clarke's murder then emerged, leading to his trial, conviction and imprisonment.

Once this process was set in motion, ten-and-a-half years ago, Home Office and prison authorities became involved in preventing Cleeland's conviction from being questioned. To an innocent person, the most terrifying aspect of this inexorable process must be one's utter helplessness, trapped by an omnipotent Home Office which regulates one's every contact, however small, with the outside world. A prisoner is not even allowed to choose a doctor to examine him or her.

DOUBTS ABOUT Cleeland's conviction focus on the evidence offered by the prosecution that a Gye Moncrieffe shotgun was the murder weapon and that traces of lead on Cleeland's clothes showed he had shot a gun. Yet the preliminary advice of a senior barrister, asked to review the case in 1980, said: 'We are quite satisfied that there exists in this case a quite unusual number of blemishes in connection with the police evidence.'

Much of that evidence came from John McCafferty, a firearms expert from the Metropolitan Police Laboratory, who provided vital information linking the murder, the Moncrieffe gun and Cleeland. Yet some days after the point when police later claimed they had linked the gun with the crime, they had gone to collect two guns found in a weir by Essex police, following information received.

After examining the pattern of shot in Clarke's body, McCafferty testified that he thought he had been shot with the Moncrieffe gun from about 18 feet away. There were two eye-witnesses to Clarke's murder. Both said he was shot from about six feet away. One, Clarke's wife, said the murderer was 'about five feet eight inches, had dark curly hair and was wearing a dark suit with a vent in the back.' (Cleeland is fair and about 5 feet 11 inches.)

Since then, three other experts have carried out, at different times, tests on the Moncrieffe gun in McCafferty's presence. They have estimated the distance needed to produce the pattern of shot to be 38 feet, 40 feet and 36 feet respectively. Their estimates, unlike McCafferty's, are therefore six times greater than the eye-witnesses'. If all these three experts and the two eye-witnesses are right, Clarke could not have been shot with the Moncrieffe gun.

Dr Julius Grant, secretary of the Society of Forensic Medicine, assessed the ballistics evidence in 1981. He then said that this evidence 'would appear to provide Mr Cleeland with ample reasons for wanting the case re-opened and on purely scientific grounds I cannot do other than support them.'

Experts have been known to disagree on scientific evidence. But in Cleeland's trial, McCafferty's greater expertise was cited to suggest his evidence was more trustworthy than that of an expert witness for the defence. McCafferty claimed that he had 24 years' expertise in the use and testing of firearms. This is an exaggeration. For 16 of the years in which he was employed by a forensic laboratory, he worked as a Liaison Officer, liaising between police and laboratories, and it was some time before he undertook his own experiments and tests. A firearms section was only established in the Metropolitan Laboratories in 1964, nine years before Cleeland's trial.

While no one questions that, by 1973, McCafferty *was* an expert in firearms, he had no formal qualifications in forensic chemistry. Nonetheless he had carried out tests to establish whether there was lead on Cleeland's clothes, although a qualified chemist had already carried out various tests of the clothes. In telling the court that lead on Cleeland's clothes did connect him with firing the gun, McCafferty failed to say when and where he had conducted his tests, what equipment he had used, how much lead contamination he had found, and whether it could be clearly shown that the lead must have come from a gun rather than the environment.

Last year, an article in *The Times* asked similar questions. McCafferty replied to the

Shirley Williams (left) and Bowen Wells MP (right): committed to helping Cleeland clear his name

David Fowler

UPP

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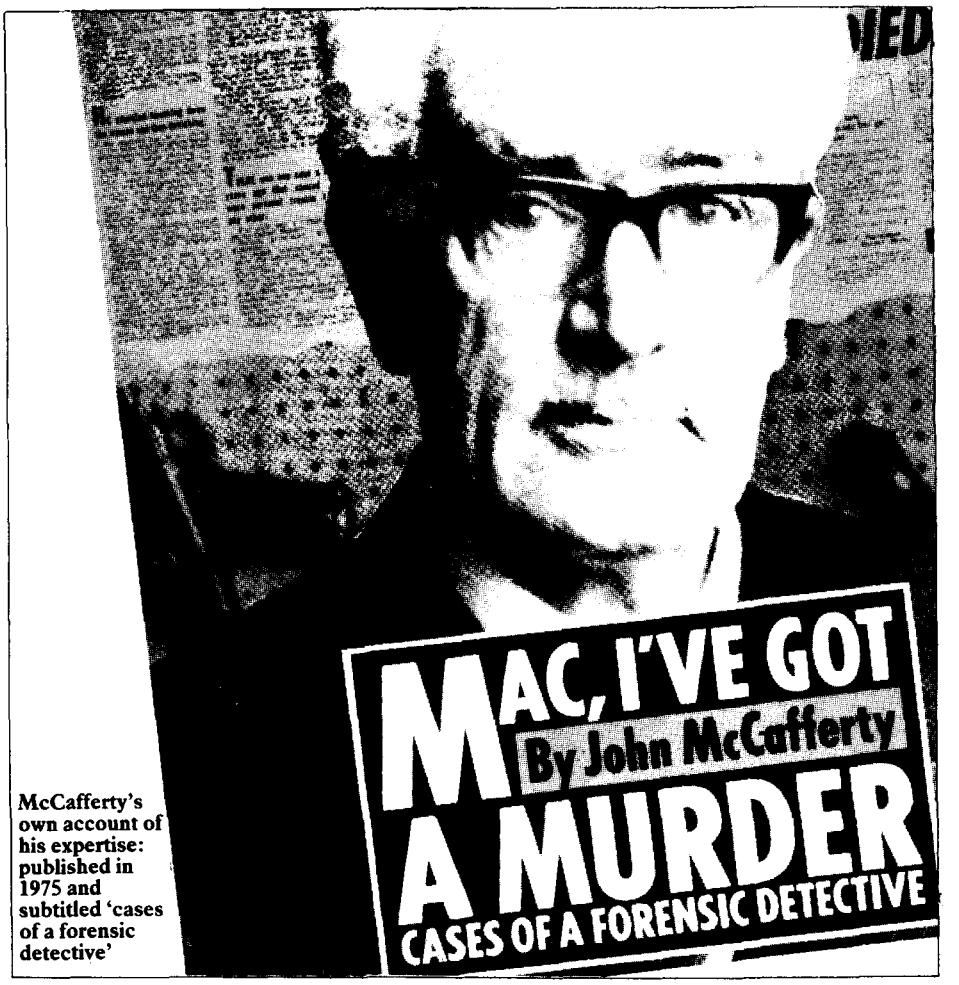
Mr John McCafferty

In an article in April about some disquieting features of Paul Cleeland's conviction for murder in June 1973, we criticized Mr John McCafferty, then principal scientific officer at the Metropolitan Police Forensic Laboratory and now an independent firearms consultant, for his omission to submit Cleeland's clothes to a lead test differentiating between environmental contamination and lead from firearms. We are asked to make it clear that this test had not been developed in 1973, and could not therefore have been used. We apologize to Mr McCafferty for this mistake.

From *The Times* of 13 August 1982



McCafferty's own account of his expertise: published in 1975 and subtitled 'cases of a forensic detective'

article, saying no test existed in 1972 which could distinguish between direct and indirect lead contamination. *The Times* apologised for its implications.

In fact, such a test did exist, using a piece of equipment known as a spark source spectrograph. The spectrograph was, says a leading forensic scientist, Henry Bland, 'in use in every forensic laboratory in this country and was considered to be (the) most vital tool available to forensic scientists in those days. The manufacturers, Hilger Analytical Ltd, also confirmed to the *New Statesman* that the equipment for the test was available in 1972.

Forensic scientists should apply other rigorous conditions in determining the source of trace elements on a suspect's clothes. McCafferty himself wrote in a letter in 1978: 'in my belief . . . the only method of determining whether or not a weapon was likely to deposit detectable residues was to make a test . . . preferably in circumstances similar to the occurrence in question (i.e. in windy outdoor places or indoors or whatever prevailed).' The only tests McCafferty carried out on the gun in Cleeland's trial were in a laboratory.

CLEELAND WAS granted leave to appeal against conviction in 1973. As he was preparing his case, he discovered that his prison documents recorded that he had a visit from a man called Nash on 4 December 1973. No such visit had taken place. Nash, a fellow inmate at Wandsworth, had heard about Cleeland's case and realised that he could give evidence which would contradict a significant piece of evidence produced by the police. Nash and Cleeland did not meet, however, in case there was suspicion of collusion. Instead, on his release, Nash gave a statement to Cleeland's solicitor.

Cleeland demanded an inquiry into how a non-existent meeting had been recorded in his prison documents. A Home Office inquiry confirmed the meeting had taken place. Cleeland persisted with his complaint and, with help from a sympathetic prison officer, succeeded in establishing that he had had no meeting with Nash. The porter's gate at Wandsworth recorded that Cleeland had had a visit from a man called Russell on that day.

This strange entry in Cleeland's records was, said the Home Office subsequently, a 'clerical error'. At his appeal hearing, Cleeland wanted to produce his prison records as evidence that someone had tampered with them in order to discredit his witness. Judge Lawton accepted the Home Office's explanation of a clerical error, and as everyone now agreed that there never had been a meeting between Nash and Cleeland, what the records may or may not have said was no longer relevant. The appeal was turned down, though, by this time, his MP Shirley Williams was pressing for an inquiry into the case.

Cleeland was by 1976 in Gartree prison, Liverpool. There, the vice-governor was sufficiently perturbed by Cleeland's allegations about his records that he carried out his own inquiry. He told Mrs Williams that in his opinion it was impossible for the records to have been altered in error. His report was ignored by the Home Office, but was absorbed into the full inquiry that was eventually carried out, in 1975, by Mr E. J. Boothby, Assistant Chief Constable of the Northamptonshire police. The results of the Boothby inquiry have never been made public, nor been made known to Mrs Williams, or Cleeland's solicitor.

Cleeland's records were also altered to eradicate a visit that had in fact taken place. This meeting was with a man called Newton, a prosecution witness in Cleeland's trial. Newton visited Cleeland on 8 August 1973. Cleeland claims Newton told him that he had only given evidence under police pressure of being charged with armed robbery himself, but he was now willing to tell the truth. Cleeland told him to contact his solicitor.

Cleeland claims that Newton was then picked up by Stevenage police, warned not to give evidence for Cleeland, and told that he should deny he had ever met Cleeland. Newton's whereabouts are now unknown and it might have seemed that Cleeland had imagined the whole thing had another vice-governor at Gartree, Mr A. de Frisching, not written to him in June 1977 to say: 'Prison records at Wandsworth show that you were visited by Newton on 8th of August 1973. However there is no confirmation of this in your prison record . . . Your letter sheets are also defective in a number of other respects. It is impossible to explain why your letter sheets are in the state they are.'

NOW CLEELAND alleges that he is being given dangerous drugs secretly and against his will. The purpose of this would be obvious; to convince any other authorities or sympathisers looking at his case that he is unbalanced, and his charges therefore not to be taken seriously.

Cleeland says he was first administered such drugs in October last year. The Home Office wrote to Bowen Wells, Cleeland's current MP, on 28 February this year: 'He has not been given . . . drugs against his will. There is no record of his having made a request that the alleged administration of such drugs should be investigated nor has he been seen by a doctor for such a purpose.' On 11 May Lord Elton wrote again to Bowen Wells: 'I am of course, very sorry that my letter of 28th February was mislead-

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ing in stating that Mr Cleeland had not made a complaint. I have no reason to believe that this was the result of anything other than a simple misunderstanding.' Cleeland had, in fact, seen a doctor and made a complaint, as his prison records show.

As Cleeland's case drags on, now in its eleventh year, more and more people have something to lose if his initial allegations – and all the ones that hang on them – are proved right. McCafferty has been a police expert witness in very many trials. A number of those involved in investigating the murder are now in positions of responsibility.

The competence of whole systems of police investigation, prison care, medical supervision and Home Office inquiry, are also thrown into doubt. Since Cleeland was convicted, he has been the responsibility of the Home Office which itself decides whether or not he has been the victim of any miscarriage of justice. In 1968, the campaigning organisation Justice recommended the creation of an official, independent system for properly investigating cases in which genuine doubts had been raised. Four years later, Lord Devlin's committee recommended that the Home Office should study 'the feasibility of setting up an independent review tribunal'. Shirley Williams points out that in the USA, with its Freedom of Information Act, it would have been impossible to conceal the report by Boothby, which she was not allowed to read even as a privy councillor.

In a written summary of his case last year Cleeland asked: 'Am I expendable for what I know, because if I am so are we all and 1984 is here and you will have let it happen.' □

ECOLOGY PARTY

In the wings

In the light of the German Greens' success, Wolfgang Rüdig examines the prospects for Britain's Ecology Party

THE SUCCESS OF the German Greens has given a major impetus to renewed British interest in the 'green' movement. But is that impetus forceful enough to do more than tickle British politics?

Britain was, in fact, the first European country to have an ecological party, but, since its foundation in 1973, the Ecology Party has remained on the fringes of British politics. Nobody in this year's election campaign seems to have taken it seriously. Despite expanded media coverage, presentation mainly concentrated on such 'freak' issues as organic farming, or the legalisation of cannabis. Petra Kelly helping to launch the party's campaign was news. The contents of the party's programme were not. Fielding more than 100 candidates in the general election, the Ecology Party polled an average of 1.0 per cent of the votes.

Although better than many fringe groups, this was worse than 1979 and hardly very encouraging.

The discrimination against small parties by the British electoral system is the usual reason given for the weakness of British ecologists. A closer look at the Ecology Party's history reveals many other important influences.

The cradle of the Ecology Party is Coventry. Here, a group of business people, witnessing the decline of British industry, became attracted to the doomsday predictions of popular ecologists in the early 1970s. An article by Paul Ehrlich in *Playboy* set the ball rolling, leading to the foundation, in January 1973, of a party named 'People'. The new party (which changed its name to 'Ecology Party' in 1975) tried to attract the existing environmental groups, such as the Conservation Society and Friends of the Earth, to party political activity. In this, it largely failed. The Environment movement remained intensely hostile to such an idea, preferring to fight single issues as pressure groups. For this, groups had not only to command expert opinion, but also to remain 'moderate', 'responsible' and 'respectable'.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, there were certainly important changes, with conflicts being fought more openly in public and the media and the public inquiry becoming of greater importance. But the basically 'unpolitical' nature of the movement remained, making life very difficult for the protagonists of an ecological political party.

In the first years of its existence, the party remained fairly small, not reaching 200 members until 1976. At both 1974 general elections, 'People' fielded candidates: in February, its five candidates scored an average of 1.8 per cent; in October, the average score of its three candidates fell to 0.7 per cent. By 1975, the party experienced its worst crisis, with important leading members leaving or withdrawing from political activity. Only in 1977, with a new leadership taking charge, were the fortunes of the party reversed. This early failure, which almost ended the party's existence, must be seen against the background of a general decline of public concern over such traditional ecologist issues as the population explosion, or the limits to growth. Its major shortcoming was, however, the failure to acquire a constituency, a social base on which it could rely.

Looking at other 'green' parties in continental Europe, one can observe a consistent split between 'right' and 'left', or 'green greens' and 'red greens'. In electoral terms, the ecological right has not done well. Where it has stood as a party in its own right (as in Germany with the Ecological-Democratic Party of Herbert Gruhl) it has made no impact whatsoever. Far more successful have been parties combining ecological questions with issues promoted by the New Left, the students' movement and its offspring.

THE BRITISH ECOLOGY Party, in its early days, missed out almost totally on the Left. Its founder members had been solicitors and estate agents with a conservative background. One major theoretical inspiration had been Edward Goldsmith, editor of the *Ecologist* and main author of the celebrated *Blueprint for Survival*, who held the view that the reaching of the limits of resources would be preceded by a total social and political breakdown, with the ensuing chaos leading to dictatorial forms of government. The only alternative was seen to be the establishment of 'strong' government now, to prevent, if necessary with authoritarian measures, an escalation of environmental crisis. Goldsmith's social ideal was a hunter-gatherer society, and he basically desired the build-up of a non-industrial society on these principles. The emancipation of women and racial integration were not, for him, compatible with such an ecological society, and were explicity rejected. Since he was the most prominent early recruit of the new party, an image of reactionary 'eco-fascism' arose.

Goldsmith's views did not, however, remain uncontested inside the party. At the first national conferences, in 1974 and 1975, a number of students and younger people from Leeds and Liverpool formed a kind of 'left' opposition to the party leadership. It objected to a total rejection of industrial society. It supported the feminist movement and the integration of foreign immigrants, and could not accept the idea of an ecological authoritarianism. But although the Left had a number of programmatic successes and a dominant influence in the writing of the 1975 party programme (which is still the basis of Ecology Party policy) it remained isolated both inside the party and in the British Left in general. By 1975, the socialist wing of the party had largely disappeared. Where socialists became interested in environmental politics, they mainly joined the Socialist Environment and Resources Association (SERA), set up in 1973, which concentrates on changing Labour Party and trade union policies.

When, by 1977, a new generation of leading Ecology Party members had initiated a recovery of the party, the old left/right cleavage had outlived itself. The new leaders were pragmatic. Their initiative first of all led to the build-up of a national party with a workable infrastructure. A rise of membership to about 500 in 1978 set the pace for the fielding of 52 candidates in the 1979 general election. This qualified the party for an election TV-spot, which, for the first time, made the greater British public

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Edward Goldsmith: an image of 'eco-fascism'

aware of its existence. The 52 candidates polled an average 1.6 per cent, but, more importantly, membership rocketed in to the thousands as a result of the election campaign. The peak of 5,500 members was reached in early 1981. The following year brought a sharp fall in subscriptions, cutting membership by about half, but now it is on the rise again, approaching the 4,000 mark.

THE NEW INTAKE brought with it a broadening of the party's base and new ideological inputs. It also brought new conflicts. On one hand, there were the pragmatic 'electoralists' who sought to rely on traditional party politics and the electoral process to gain a foothold of parliamentary power to initiate a major environmental reform programme aiming at achieving a decentralised, steady-state economy. These had been mainly responsible for the party's revival in the late 1970s and continued to play a very important role. On the other hand, there was the so-called 'anarchist' faction (mostly of young radicals and alternative-lifestyle enthusiasts) who rejected traditional party politics, desired the almost total decentralisation of the party organisation and the greater involvement of the party in extra-parliamentary movements, such as the anti-nuclear and peace movements.

In the last two years, both positions have compromised. The radical wing has successfully withstood moves to centralise party structures further (a rotation system of leadership is maintained); it has also succeeded in opening up the party to greater participation in social movements, peace campaign activities and civil disobedience; but at the same it concentrates its own activities on the local level, leaving the national representation largely to the electoralists.

Despite these considerable moves, there are few signs of major, public success. For one thing, the nuclear energy issue, despite the Sizewell Inquiry, did not escalate into a major movement. The delays in the nuclear construction programme that had been announced in 1979 and the general 'low key' approach taken by the government, particularly the withdrawal of the test programme for nuclear waste disposal and of controversial new nuclear sites such as Luxulyan in Cornwall, largely removed the potential for a large protest campaign. In addition, the peace issue more and more pushed nuclear energy into the background of public attention. The Ecology Party could thus not build on a radicalised environmental mass protest movement, as have the German Greens.

Secondly, the Left (in its broadest sense) has not significantly changed its attitude to environmental issues. Labour still appears to be in favour of a British nuclear reactor programme and embraces major industrial expansion as its solution to current economic ills. In addition to the peace issue, the traditional social problems of unemployment, social security and housing dominate the activities of the wider Left. Environmental issues play a marginal role, being regarded either as middle-class causes to protect special privileges or as a problem which can be solved by traditional socialist planning.

Thirdly, the Ecology Party has not yet managed to acquire significant support from other social movements. Most members of the peace movement appear to look upon the Labour Party as their parliamentary representative and no major political input can be expected before an incoming Labour government disappoints (as it might) larger sections of the peace movement.

Outside the nuclear weapons issue, the Ecology Party appears totally unable to capitalise on social conflicts. It has been unable, for example, to represent the concerns of either frustrated urban youth or ethnic minorities. It has also failed to integrate the various sectors of the New Left.

Finally, the chances of the Ecology Party attracting the middle-of-the-road voter and the protest vote have been spoiled by the SDP/Liberal Alliance. The Alliance has also absorbed much of the media attention for which the Ecology Party had hoped.

This pessimistic assessment of the party's prospects should not lead to the conclusion that the Ecology Party can be ignored. It is still the only British political party with a genuine ecological and radical disarmament programme. Should the established parties continue to fail in government, with pressing social problems getting out of hand and the environmental crisis becoming more apparent, it has every chance to start breaking the mould of British politics in the future. That potential breakthrough, however, seems a long way off, and would require major changes in the political constellations inhibiting Ecology Party success. For the time being, the party must be content to retain a core of dedicated supporters and just keep going.

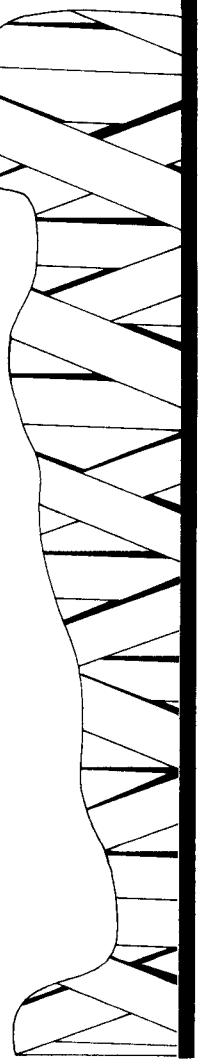
The 1983 general election has been important in this respect. The Ecology Party could hardly have looked for imminent political breakthrough. What it got was a message from the British electorate that its existence is appreciated and that it should remain on stand-by for whatever the future might hold in store. □

Wolfgang Rüdig researches on environmental and energy politics at the Department of Liberal Studies in Science of the University of Manchester.

Mobil

Mummy knows best

When it comes to making the best use of oil, the ancients were pretty adept. ▽▽▽ The oldest known Egyptian mummies were encased in cloth that had been treated with liquid bitumen. ▽▽▽ But it wasn't just preservation that held their interest. Early records refer to the use of asphalt, which the Sumerians employed as a cement for their mosaics, and Nebuchadnezzar constructed a road of burnt bricks laid on asphalt. The Bible too has many references to crude petroleum. The 'pitch' covering Noah's Ark was undoubtedly bitumen and it's probable that the 'slime' used in the Tower of Babel was asphalt. ▽▽▽ Pliny mentions that Sicilian oil was burnt in the lamps of the temple of Jupiter. 'Burning Water' was in use in Japan in AD 615, and more than a thousand years ago Yenangyaung in Burma was a developed oil field. And today? ▽▽▽ Well, we're still striving to make the best possible use of our most valuable resource. Take Mobil's new £200M cracking complex for instance. Just installed at Coryton refinery, it is designed to produce substantially more petrol from every barrel of crude oil. ▽▽▽ In these days of fuel economy that's just the sort of advantage Britain could do with. ▽▽▽ Perhaps it wasn't just the Egyptians who had things all wrapped up. ▽▽



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Class of '83

Labour's overwhelming defeat at the general election produced a political crisis which has been felt acutely by socialists – but much less by members of other radical movements. From this week, the New Statesman *is opening its pages to a discussion on the future of socialism – what form it will take if it is to survive as a vigorous and creative movement, or, indeed, whether the future of radical politics lies with socialism as it has been understood in Britain. We begin the discussion with an article* by Barry Hindess, who goes back to the themes of class and socialist politics raised by Anthony Crosland in the 1950s.*

'THE END of class politics' has been an important theme in the analysis of British politics since at least the late 1950s. While we can question whether what went before might reasonably be called 'class politics', the phrase encapsulates significant trends in electoral behaviour, culminating in the catastrophic loss of Labour support in 1983. These trends have been widely recognised by political commentators over the last 20 years or so. As a party Labour may have done little to take account of these trends, but the writing has been all too clearly on the wall for a very long time. One of the earliest and best of the 'end of class politics' arguments is Tony Crosland's *Can Labour Win?*, published in the aftermath of the 1959 defeat. There we find many of the themes that subsequently surfaced in the aftermath of 1979 and again, in the *Guardian* Agenda page, the Labour Co-ordinating Committee's election analysis, 'After the Landslide', and elsewhere, in the aftermath of 1983:

- changes in the occupational structure involving the growth of white collar and the decline of traditional working-class occupations;
- social and geographical mobility and the break-up of old working-class communities;
- a fall in the proportion of working-class voters who see politics in class terms;
- the growing unpopularity of the unions (as long ago as 1960 Crosland could write of Gallup Poll evidence of 'a steady 20-year decrease in the numbers of those who think the unions a good thing');
- falling support for nationalisation, public spending on social services and other established Labour positions, even among Labour voters.

To these themes Crosland added the 'affluent worker' argument, that better-off manual workers were getting in to commodities (cars, TVs, washing machines), adopting a middle-class, private life-style, and even a middle-class psychology – and therefore voting Conservative. Unlike his other themes this last argument had little empirical support. Mark Abrams's careful analysis of the *Socialist Commentary* survey published in *Must Labour Lose?* (another response to the 1959 defeat) shows that working-class 'affluence' was not particularly associated with Conservative voting. The index that was associated with Tory support was house ownership; that writing too has been on the wall for Labour for a very long time.

Crosland drew two major political lessons. First, that Labour cannot rely on its 'class' basis of support. It must therefore win support from people who don't vote on class lines – he refers to those who make 'a less automatic assessment' of their political interests. Secondly, in order to win that support, Labour must do something about its unpopular images (nationalisation, bureaucracy, controls . . .).

Crosland's pamphlet is exemplary in both its strengths and its weaknesses. Notice first that whatever the problems with Crosland's 'affluent worker' arguments, the occupational and electoral trends he identifies continued, with their effects now far worse for Labour than they were in 1960. Notice also that there have been significant occupational changes that are usually ignored in this sort of argument. Most writers treat the occupational structure as consisting of men, so that the working class that is said to be shrinking consists essentially of male manual workers. In fact there has been a massive growth of women's employment since the war, and this has important implications for Labour.

Secondly, the trends Crosland identifies did not stop Labour from winning elections, albeit on a declining share of electoral support and at a time when Labour could reckon without the intervention of an effective third party.

Notice finally that Crosland's explanation is essentially non-political in character, and the same is true of all the others who stress occupational changes and other economic trends in their explanation of Labour's electoral decline. Once upon a time there was a traditional working class who 'automatically' voted Labour but this has been undermined by economic changes: first, it is smaller as a proportion of the adult population and, secondly, it has been infected by affluence, consumerism, and other consequences of economic growth. Crosland's argument here is realistic and hard-headed in style, but a romanticised version of much the same story can be found in the writings of Jeremy Seabrook.

What is at issue here is an economistic or reductionist political analysis that is every bit as damaging as the economism of the marxist left in that it treats significant features of political life (in this case the 'class' or 'non-class' character of the political orientations of the electorate) as if they were formed independently of the activities of parties and other political agencies, and ultimately as if they were a function of changes in the economy.

IN CONTRAST to these non-political accounts of Labour's electoral decline there are various accounts that stress the role of politics. One that is still very popular on the Left is the betrayal argument. This supposes that the Labour Party gives the impression, especially in opposition, of being a socialist party committed to the interests of the working class, but in government it persistently betrays those interests, thereby alienating working-class support. Advocates of this view differ over whether the Labour Party can be changed. Ralph Miliband, David Coates and others see the Labour Party itself as a major obstacle to socialist politics and the pursuit of working-class interests, and one that cannot be reformed. Here the decline of Labour as a major electoral force is seen as a necessary precondition of socialist advance.

Inside the Labour Left the story is rather different; betrayal is seen as being a question of leadership. The party membership is basically socialist, but it is betrayed by the PLP and party leadership. Such betrayal can be resolved by 'democratic' reforms, tying the hands of MPs and party leaders so that they remain accountable to the membership. Both these positions assume that a substantial majority of the working class perceives its own political and economic interest to be socialist, for which there is little supporting evidence.

However, there is an important way in which parties affect the character of electoral struggles. Government policies produce effects which can transform political concerns and the pattern of political interests. Consider a few examples. Although most of the post-war period in Britain has been characterised by economic growth and rising living standards for the employed population, both Labour and Conservative governments have established a long record of economic policy 'failure' – that is, they lack the power over the economy to fulfil electoral promises. There is now widespread

* A short version of this article was presented at the Labour Co-ordinating Committee conference, 'Why Did We Lose?', in Manchester, 22-24 July 1983.

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scepticism over the ability of any government to manage the economy, scepticism assiduously fostered by the present Tory leadership but also with a substantial basis in the experience of the last 30 years. Advocates of planning as part of a programme of economic reconstruction must take this scepticism and the reasons for it far more seriously than Labour has managed to date.

Then there is housing, where government policies *have* had a major impact. Labour and Conservative governments have both encouraged an enormous expansion of home ownership during the post-war period – it was a Labour government that introduced option mortgages. In addition, at least until the 1960s, both parties, nationally and locally, presided over a considerable volume of local authority housing construction. The Conservatives may have lent rather more in favour of private ownership and Labour more in favour of council housing, but in general both parties supported both developments and the consequent squeezing out of the private rented sector. Nevertheless, Labour comes across as hostile to home ownership. As for council housing, Labour is no longer a party that builds new housing, as it was in the 1940s and 1950s. Rather it is a party that administers the existing stock – and does so in ways that are often bureaucratic, inefficient, authoritarian and insensitive.

This means that the political significance of housing has been transformed since the war as a result of government policies – and Labour has lost out badly in the process. (A similar point could be made about the NHS which has long since ceased to be a new and promising gift presented to the people by Labour.) Labour cannot afford to forget that many working people are also owner-occupiers, and that many who are not would dearly like to be if only they could afford it. A recent survey showed that over 80 per cent of young people wanted to be owner-occupiers. We have to face up to what it is about private housing and the character and administration of council housing that makes so many who are not owner-occupiers wish that they were.

As a final example, notice that Labour and especially Conservative governments have fostered the growth of private pensions and insurance – with public provision as a basic (i.e. minimal and unsatisfactory) safety net. What is involved here is the growth and encouragement of individualistic and sectional provision as distinct from social and collective provision. As with the growth of home ownership, these developments have created new and major political interests and concerns which are not confined to the middle classes. Labour in government has done much to encourage those developments, which the Labour Party has yet to come to terms with. Such new interests do not merely arise from 'affluence' but are a consequence of government policies.

Will Self

'I'M SUFFERING FROM THE DELUSION THAT I CAN AFFORD TO PAY YOUR FEE . . .

WHAT HAS TO be done if Labour is to regain its position as a major electoral force? Although Labour is not a programmatic socialist party, it is the only major party where the appeal to socialist principles can still have an impact. I have argued that political and economic changes, many of them politically induced, have produced new constellations of political interests and new sets of political concerns. Labour has to come to terms with these. It has to take seriously what people's current concerns and interests are, not what we think they ought to be, and use these as a basis for trying to put together electoral support. But let me concentrate here on what has traditionally been regarded as the primary basis of Labour's electoral support, the idea that it is the party of the working class.

To begin with, Labour has to break out of its habit of treating traditional, male-dominated occupations and their unions as the cornerstone of its support. Labour's links with the unions are both a tremendous political bonus and a source of major problems. They are a bonus first because, for all their faults, the unions are an important democratic element in our society, and secondly, because, of all the major parties, Labour in government has the best chance of implementing a programme of economic reconstruction with active cooperation from the shop floor. But if Labour's links with the unions are to be a foundation of its future electoral support, then it must face up to the need for major reform of the unions.

Labour's links with the unions pull in conflicting directions. Women now make up some 40 per cent of the labour force in Britain and whatever some of the Tory leadership may feel about it, the majority of women now see themselves as being in the labour market for most of their adult lives. A party of the working people has to be a party of working women, and Labour has a very long way to go before it gets there.

Some of the unions and their leaders are being forced to take account of the interests of working women and the problems they face because of pressure from their members. Others, on the left and on the right, organising the more traditional occupations and skills, are effectively bastions of male privilege in the workplace and the labour market – defenders of 'free' collective bargaining and of differentials, opponents of minimum wage legislation and of a generally egalitarian approach to incomes, hostile or indifferent to the kinds of flexibility over hours of work that could help to break down divisions between full-time and part-time employment and to make life easier for working mothers (and fathers) and married women workers.

The point is not that Labour's stand on these issues, and its equivocations on some of them, has retained its support among skilled male workers. In fact, more of them voted Conservative than Labour at the last election. The point rather is that if Labour allows its positions on the economy, wages and conditions of employment to be dominated by the unions representing these sectional interests, then it is in danger of throwing away its chances of becoming the party of working women – and indeed of all the others who work in banks or building societies, supermarkets or the public services rather than on the railways, in steel or the mines, or in the traditional skilled occupations. The danger is of Labour digging itself into a minority ghetto of declining occupations.

The Labour Party may have a chance of again becoming the party of working people, and of those looking for work, but it cannot do so on the old basis. It has to reconstruct the bases of its support, to reconstruct its policies on wages, hours and conditions of employment, to reconstruct its relationship to the unions and to help the unions reconstruct themselves, and it has to recognise and come to terms with the political interests and concerns that have developed in the course of the social and economic changes of the post-war period.

Barry Hindess

Barry Hindess is the author of The Decline of Working Class Politics, *a study of the decline of support for the Labour Party in Liverpool after the war. His most recent book is* Parliamentary Democracy and Socialist Politics, *Routledge, £3.95.*

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BANKING

Profits of doom

New technology threatens bank jobs. John Rentoul reports

IN THE early years of the last Conservative government, the banks made such huge profits that Geoffrey Howe felt obliged to levy a once-off 'windfall' tax on them – with inflation at 22 per cent banks couldn't fail to make money, because they don't pay their customers any interest on current accounts. Profits from domestic banking are now, as they say in the City, 'under pressure', despite the fact that Midland Bank reported profit for the first half of this year up 43 per cent. Nat West has reported only a modest increase and Lloyds a modest fall, these fluctuations being attributable mainly to the erratic course of foreign lending. At home the banks are now being forced to find new ways of maintaining profit growth.

As labour costs make up two-thirds of banks' costs, new labour-saving technology is the most important single means of boosting profitability. All the big four clearing banks, as well as Williams and Glyn's (part of the Royal Bank of Scotland group), the Co-op and the Trustee Savings Banks, are 'restructuring' their operations. The banks say this is to segregate specialist aspects of banking, moving away from the traditional idea of the branch manager who is all things to all people. The Banking, Insurance and Finance Union, BIFU, suspects that it is part of a softening-up process designed to make the introduction of new technology easier, and to blur the perception of any connection between job losses and new technology. The Midland's plan to shut 150 branches and cut 3,000 jobs in the next three years, for example, was reported in the *Guardian* as a 'plan to streamline its network in a costs and efficiency drive'. No mention there of new technology, only the implication drawn down from the political arena that belts have to be tightened.

We are all familiar, although we may not know it, with automated teller machines (ATMs), which are the first wave of this 'new technology'. We may know them as 'holes in the wall', but ATMs are the next stage on from the 'old' new technology of the big number-crunching and information-storing computers. BIFU regards one ATM as equivalent to one job. A year ago there were 3,500 ATMs in this country; by the end of this year there will be about 5,500.

Total bank staff numbers, for the six Committee of London Clearing Bankers (CLCB) banks, the 'big four' plus Coutts (a subsidiary of Nat West) and Williams and Glyn's, have been static for the past few years at about 235,000, although bank business has increased enormously. This figure includes about 16,000 part-time workers, all women, whose numbers have grown slightly. At its conference this year, BIFU decided to offer membership to part-timers at reduced subscription rates to prevent banks re-organising work around a large section of staff with no job rights.

This re-organising is in fact well under way. The Banking Studies department at Loughborough University predicts that bank staff numbers will fall by 12 per cent by 1990. Women form 55 per cent of the CLCB's full-time staff and 100 per cent of the part-time staff, and are concentrated almost exclusively in clerical and administrative grades (those most under threat from new technology) through which men tend to move quickly. The banks tend to employ the women young, between 16 and 18, and to make sure they don't come back after they have children, unless it's part-time. They provide the banks with a workforce that is short-term, non-unionised, flexible and non-political.

The banks' employers organisation, the Federation of London Clearing Bank Employers, says it is 'not our policy to run roughshod over the unions', a disingenuous phrase as the only other 'union' with negotiating rights is the Clearing Banks Union (CBU), a confederation of the three staff associations in Barclays, Nat West and Lloyds. Bank staff are split roughly in equal thirds between BIFU, CBU and non-unionised employees. CBU is not a member of the TUC and never challenges the banks over policy issues.

JUST AS the banks need a strategy for the coming years of rapid technological change, BIFU needs to alert its generally complacent and politically conservative membership to the implications. 'We've got a fairly awful time ahead,' says Stan Coote, BIFU's seconded representative (chief shop steward) at Barclays. 'First we've got to convince the staff of the reality of what's going to happen, and then we've got to overcome fatalism, we've got to say there is time to do something about it.'

BIFU is trying to publicise the next 'wave' of technology before it happens, but at best its role is to extract some benefits for its members rather than be a partner in deciding how labour – and therefore technology – should be organised. CHAPS, the Clearing Houses Automated Payment System, will computerise the same-day settling-up system of the main City of London banks. Although some of the clearing banks' 8,000 messengers may be redeployed, the employment consequences will not be drastic until the system is further developed.

More important is EFTPOS, or Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale, which will enable shoppers to pay for goods by means of a card and a personal number fed into a computer terminal in the shop. This will begin to make cheques redundant, and cheques, despite those peculiar computer-readable numbers along the bottom, are still a labour-intensive business. At a conference in November this year, retailers, bankers, accountants, advertisers and representatives of British Telecom and the Consumers' Association will meet to discuss EFTPOS. The programme reads: 'Banks all over the world are now well advanced in their plans to introduce EFTPOS. How well are you prepared for this new wave?'

BIFU officals report a 'grassroots feeling of general apprehension', as four of the banks have made their restructuring plans explicit in the past couple of months. Barclays have begun a 'one bank' exercise, with the aim of integrating Barclays Bank International (BBI) into the main bank. The Midland, which has already lost 10 per cent of its staff through natural wastage over the past two years, aims to lose another 6 per cent by 1986. Williams and Glyn's reorganisation is the most dramatic in proportional terms, as it could lose 3,000 out of a total of only 16,000 staff on merging with the Royal Bank of Scotland. The Co-op Bank is also reorganising its operations, and, just like its capitalist counterparts, is refusing to give BIFU guarantees about possible future compulsory redundancies.

The first casualty of increasing BIFU militancy is the joint clearing banks' Youth Training Scheme. The Manpower Services Commission hopes to have 4,000 school leavers 'placed' with the banks by September, but BIFU rejected the Federation's proposals with less than two months to go. Terry Molloy, BIFU deputy general secretary, has insisted on certain employment conditions to match those of employees, proper monitoring of the scheme and proper off-the-job training.

BIFU's natural suspicion is that when the Midland, for example, is losing 1,000 staff this year while at the same time taking on 750 trainees, cheap or free labour is being used as a substitute for real jobs. BIFU's opposition means that the Federation and the MSC's Large Companies Unit are back at the drawing board, in what a Federation spokesman described as 'a confrontation between the banks and time'. □

THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed (on postcards, please).

☐ 10.10 Elizabeth Taylor in Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolfe? (1966) also starring Richard Burton and George Segal in this award-winning film about the tragic and brilliant author of 'To the Lighthouse' and 'Mrs Dalloway'. – *Sutton Borough Guardian* (Harry Edwards)

☐ Councillors got the wind up over the naming of a new street in The Philipers, Garston. The proposal on the table was to call the new road Farthing Close. But Councillor Stella Meldrum said that people would deliberately leave out the 'h' in Farthing. Members of the Highways and Works Committee plumped for the name Tibballs Close.– *Watford Observer* (A. G. Edwards)

☐ A teenager who lost his leg in a car crash has had his application for a disabled person's car parking badge rejected by Surrey Council which told him his injury was not 'permanent and substantial'. – *Daily Mail* (R. K. Morton & D. O'Mahoney)

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DIARY

We continue the extracts from 'The Secret Diary of Margaret Hilda Roberts, aged 14¼', as edited by Sue Townsend.

FRIDAY: Father has cleverly seen a gap in the lavatory paper market; illiterate households don't buy newspapers so father is selling ready-strung bundles at a penny farthing each. The first consignment went on sale at 8am and was sold out by 12.30pm. Mrs Arkwright bought six bundles explaining: 'My little 'uns 'as all got the runs through 'oles in their boots'.

A traveller from London called in for an ounce of shag and passed on a rumour he had heard that a future socialist government would introduce free milk into schools. Father went the colour of barley and had to sit down. When he recovered he said to me: 'The socialists are out to ruin the small shopkeeper, Margaret.' I said: 'But father, you'll be all right, you are over six foot tall.' The traveller and father laughed. I don't know why. If the filthy socialists ever do take power I shall refuse to drink free school milk. If the poor cannot afford to buy it then they must go without.

SATURDAY: Angela Porke-Cracklin has sent a message to the shop asking if I would make a four up in the mixed doubles to be held this evening on her parents' court. Father was delighted (he has been after the Porke-Cracklins' Earl Grey order for years). I told father that I didn't know how to play tennis. But he took his apron off and ran to the library, returning with 'Fundamentals of Lawn Tennis'. Mother was told to run a tennis dress up on the Singer and, between customers, father and I practised a few strokes using biscuit tins as racquets and stale rock cakes as balls. By four o'clock I had perfected serving to the baseline (the bacon slicer) and was working on my backhand, when mother brought my tennis dress in to be fitted. She spoilt everything by shouting 'Just look at all this 'ere mess. There's crumbs and currants all over my clean shop floor.' Father remained calm. He simply sent mother into the back room to whiten my plimsolls. By six o'clock I had memorised the rules of lawn tennis, and by 7.30 I had beaten Angela Porke-Cracklin six-love, six-love. Angela ran into the big house and refused to come out for mixed doubles so they were abandoned and I lost my chance to bring the subject of the Earl Grey order up.

Father was tearing newspaper into squares when I arrived home. We sat and discussed my triumph. Mother joined us while she unpicked the tennis dress for dusters. Thus the time before bed was spent very pleasantly.

SUNDAY: Up at 5am. Did two hours of delicious mathematical equations then woke mother and ordered her to prepare breakfast. Honestly, she is such a slug-a-bed. She would stay in bed until *7.30am* if I let her!

Chapel and Sunday school in the morning, then dinner (Lunch, Margaret, Lunch!) followed by afternoon Sunday school, high tea and evening chapel. An ordinary Sunday except for an extraordinary incident when mother was caught red-handed breaking the Sabbath. Yes, at four o'clock I walked into the back room and saw mother cleaning her shoes. I called father at once and he came downstairs and witnessed mother with the Cherry Blossom in one hand and the polish rag in the other. She begged forgiveness but father was not to be swayed and he forbade her to accompany us to evening chapel. Her absence is sure to cause tongues to wag among the congregation but rules are rules and are meant to be kept. All else is anarchy.

MONDAY: Hurrah! Another week of school begins. There is a new girl in our class. Her name is Edwina Slurry. She is obviously ambitious, but she'll have to work jolly hard to knock me from my position at the top of the class. I have asked mother if I can stop wearing a Liberty Bodice. The buttons are an awful nuisance when one is dressing after games. She is going to confer with father and let me know.

TUESDAY: I have been to see the Head to ask if I can be excused from Art. All that messing about with paint and paper is a sheer waste of time, especially when I could be working. Miss Fossedyke said: 'Margaret, the function of Art is to develop the sensibilities, and you of all the girls in my school need to do this as a matter of urgency.' I can't think what she meant by her remarks, as I am easily the most sensible girl in the school.

WEDNESDAY: Edwina Slurry has been toadying to a disgusting degree. Some of the more impressionable girls have taken to walking arm-in-arm in the corridors with her.

Lady Olga Wasteland lectured the whole school this afternoon. Her subject was 'The Horrors of War'. She related how shocked she was when she realised that fully fashioned nylons were no longer in the shops.

THURSDAY: Methodist Youth Club was spoilt by a fight involving the Prior gang and Cecil Parkhurst's friends. The tea urn was knocked over and the sugar bowl was broken. I think it is time the Prior gang is banned. They have caused nothing but trouble since they became members. Cecil behaved like the gentleman he is by escorting me out of the hall and seeing that Prior and his bully boys did not bother me.

Was rather upset when I got into bed so I indulged myself in reading my favourite page from 'Higher Mathematics Book Four'. The problem 'XXYYZZ=ZZYYZZ, discuss' never fails to make me laugh out loud. However, life can't be all pleasure so I put out the light, repeated 'The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain' 200 times and went to sleep.

ROGER WODDIS

Fable

(on the anniversary of Hiroshima, 6 August 1945)

Two magicians met in a vast arena
to decide which of them wielded
the greater power.
Around them, packing the tiers,
sat the thousands who were to judge them.
The onlookers held their breath
as Marvo and Musco began their routines.

Marvo produced a rabbit from thin air
with three heads and luminous ears.
Musco filled a bowl with water
which instantly turned bright vermilion.
The crowd cheered and their ice-creams
melted
under the merciless sun.

Trick upon trick followed in rapid succession.
Playing-cards grew wings, ropes became
snakes,
a lady was sawn in half while singing
an aria from *The Magic Flute*.
The applause was deafening and favoured
neither.

Marvo came to his final act:
an elephant vanished in a puff of smoke.
Musco, not to be outdone,
made a bus filled with passengers disappear.

Marvo fingered a button on his cloak.
'Hold it,' said Musco, seconds too late.
The crowd rose and floated down in flakes.

Marvo began to glow like a steel-furnace.
Musco became a shadow on the ground.

Nothing was heard but the sound of silence.

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FOREIGN NEWS: CENTRAL AMERICA

A back door to war

Claudia Wright reveals Israel's involvement in President Reagan's military plans in Central America

Washington

'AMERICANS DO NOT support vacillation,' Colonel Robert McFarlane, currently Deputy National Security Adviser to President Reagan, wrote in a 1978 study of presidential policy in military crises.* Americans 'expect their leaders to lead, to be clear, forthright and firm. Particularly when American lives or property have been lost, the American impulse is toward firmness. It must not be reflexive – a knee jerk – but rather thought out and appropriate in strength to the task.'

Since 1981, when McFarlane joined the administration, he has been testing out his theory as principal planner of US military tactics in Central America. As the President's newly appointed Middle East negotiator, he will now have his chance to try out the same methods in another combustible area.

There are many parallels between El Salvador and Lebanon. In both countries the US is backing minority juntas, whose power depends on their control of the army, private militias, and death squads. The form this backing takes is identical – US weapons and US military advisers, cash assistance for the economy, US troops, covert operations and shows of military force to pacify internal and external opponents.

The parallels in US policy are also plain between Cuba and Nicaragua on the one hand, and Syria and the Palestinian forces on the other. They are all regarded by Washington as Soviet cats' paws. They are defined identically as targets for military pressure, economic quarantine, and diplomatic isolation. In both Central America and the area around Lebanon, administration policy plays down local and regional sources of conflict, and plays up the contest of superpower wills. As McFarlane claims in his 1978 study, 'there is a value in being even brutal in local crises to signal the superpowers and regional adversaries about US intentions.'

The book analyses the 1975 'SS Mayaguez' incident in which a task force of marines suffered substantial casualties rescuing a smaller number of US crewmen – the book omits to mention that McFarlane was one of the policy-makers during the crisis. One of his conclusions is that such demonstrations of force can rally public opinion, and help lift the President's polls during an election campaign. The domestic pay-off of such moves depends, according to McFarlane, on the conviction that 'if you have to use force with all its attendant moral risks, do it well; act with great force. Avoid gradualism.'

It is unsurprising that McFarlane's new appointment has been welcomed by the Israelis, who repudiated his predecessor, Philip Habib. For the Syrians, who also rejected Habib, McFarlane is no improvement, since Israel plays a leading rôle in his strategy for Lebanon, just as it did in Central America. Israel was a major weapons supplier to the Somoza regime in Nicaragua; it is currently a source of arms for the anti-Sandinista rebel groups. Israeli weapons, military advisers and intelligence assistance have also been provided to El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala.

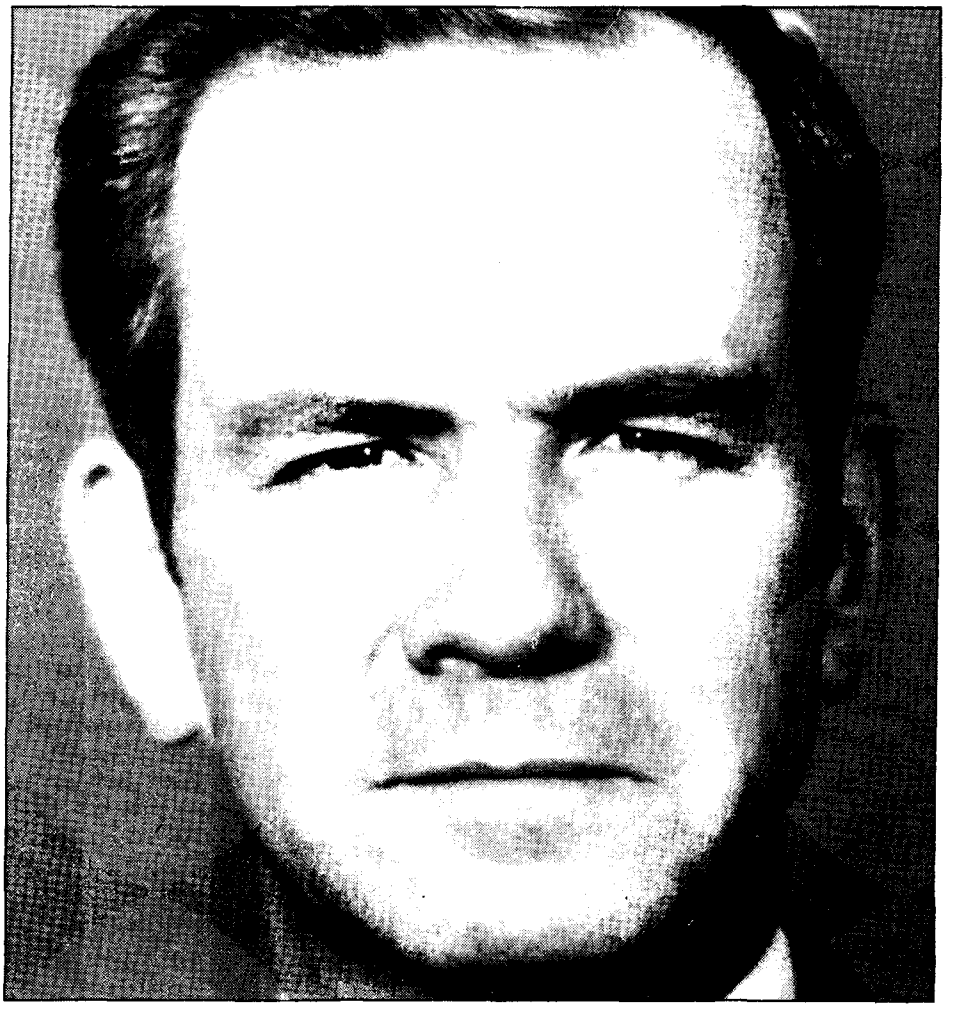
The *Jerusalem Post* has disclosed that during his June talks in Washington, David Kimche, the director-general of Israel's foreign ministry, outlined 'a far-reaching plan for Israel to revive its once flourishing technical assistance programme to African, Asian and Latin American countries . . . [Israel] is however short of cash, and that is where Washington could come into the picture, according to the Kimche proposal.' This is a cover for increased funding for Israeli military and intelligence operations.

Collaboration of this kind between the CIA and Mossad is not new. In a top secret White House document, dated 23 May 1967, and recently made available to the *NS*, it is revealed that the US gave Israel an additional $5 million for that year to finance clandestine operations in Africa. (In the 1960s David Kimche was under cover as a Mossad agent in Africa.)

More recently, Major-General Yehoshua Saguy, the head of Israel's military intelligence who lost his job at the recommendation of the commission on the Sabra and Shatila massacres, has been reported to be in Central America, discussing arms deliveries and intelligence collaboration with the juntas. According to classified US documents, 'Latin America has become Israel's prime market for military exports'.

Kimche discussed several ideas with Washington officials. According to US documents, one is a proposal for the US to permit Central American states receiving loans for US weapons purchases to spend them on Israeli arms; another proposal would allow Israel 'to sell back to the United States its obsolete and surplus equipment for possible third country transfer'. What this means is that the CIA would finance the sale by Israel of weapons – many of them captured from the PLO last year – to such groups as the anti-Sandinista rebels.

Col. Robert McFarlane: 'there is value in being brutal'



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As the Israelis explain it, this type of US financing is a back-door way of increasing US aid to Central America. It can substitute for direct US aid if congressional opposition succeeds in reducing or cutting it off altogether. Israel has several old supporters now well-placed to influence the administration in this direction, including Richard Stone, the President's special negotiator for Central America. During his years in the Senate, Stone, from Florida, was one of Israel's staunchest backers and chaired the subcommittee on the Near East, which came under the Foreign Relations Committee. Other partisans of Israel include Otto Reich, the newly named ambassador-at-large for Central America; Henry Kissinger, chairman of the new 'National Bipartisan Commission on Central America'; and Robert Strauss, a commission member and at one time President Carter's Middle East negotiator.

Congressional opposition to the administration's policy in Central America has been so intense that the White House has done more than open the Israeli back door. It has also appealed directly for Jewish support by depicting the Sandinista government in Nicaragua as anti-semitic. In addressing a meeting of American Jewish leaders at the White House on 20 July, Reagan denounced the Sandinistas for an attack on a synagogue in Managua; a White House statement was distributed claiming that 'the Sandinistas seem always to have been anti-semitic'; and two Jewish Nicaraguans in exile were introduced to the press by a presidential assistant.

This ploy did not convert many votes during the 28 July congressional roll-call on the amendment to cut off CIA funds for the Nicaraguan *Contras* – the House voted 228 to 195 to stop the money in the two remaining months of this financial year. However, the Israeli link has helped neutralise the opposition of several key Democrats in the House. They say they support the cutting off of covert US aid, but when asked by the *NS* whether they favour the use of CIA funds for financing *Israeli* arms sales to the Nicaraguan rebels, whether they support the use of US military credits to subsidise the purchase of Israeli weapons by the Central American states, and whether they would permit back-door US aid to Central America through Israel, they refused to reply.

'In a crisis situation,' Colonel McFarlane wrote in 1978, the legal requirement that Congress should approve presidential military actions can suggest 'unreliability in US behaviour . . . with respect to adversaries, it reduces the deterrent effect of any probable response'. As he moves publicly for the first time into the Middle East, McFarlane needn't be too concerned with congressional opposition. He has widened the back door to covert war in Central America. In his Middle Eastern activities, Israel and the US Congress back his methods without qualms. □

* *Crisis Resolution: Presidential Decision Making in the Mayaguez and Korean Confrontations*, by Richard G. Head, Frisco W. Short, and Robert C. McFarlane. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1978.

UNITED STATES

Spies against peace

Susan Jaffe on FBI agents spying on the peace movement

New York

RONALD REAGAN likes to think that the disarmament movement is essentially un-American, as if it can't happen here. Now that it *has* happened here, and the nuclear freeze idea shows no signs of going away, Reagan's approach is to suggest that the whole thing is the work of mysterious foreigners. In a typical assault last November, he tried to discredit the huge disarmament rally in New York a few months earlier, when one million people marched past the United Nations in the world's largest anti-nuclear protect. 'In the organisation of some of the big demonstrations, the one in New York,' Reagan told a press conference, 'there is no question about foreign agents that were sent to help instigate and help create and keep such a movement going.'

What Reagan has not yet acknowledged is that his own secret agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) are spying on the disarmament movement. But the FBI itself confirmed the presence of peace spies, in a bureaucratic fashion, when it recently refused a request under the Freedom of Information Act for any dossiers maintained on certain national anti-nuclear groups during 1981 and 1982.

The Act is used most often by journalists and historians, and it requires all government agencies to open their files upon demand to any member of the public unless the government decides that the material fits any of about 26 exemptions to the law. The FBI admitted that six groups are under investigation, but it said that the information dug up was so potentially damaging that it could not be released.

Groups investigated by the FBI include the 12 June Rally Committee, the coalition which organised last year's rally in New York, as well as rally endorsers such as Physicians for Social Responsibility, Mobilisation for Survival, the US Peace Council, the War Resisters League and the National Black United Front. All of these groups are open to the public and supported by public donations; they make no secret of what they are doing. Did the FBI really find something on these groups that nobody already knows?

According to the chief of the FBI's Freedom of Information-Privacy Acts Section of the Records Management Division, files on the Physicians for Social Responsibility (one of the most respected professional groups in the US peace movement) and the 12 June Rally Committee are entirely exempt from the disclosure act because they are classified 'in the interest of national defence or foreign policy, for example information involving intelligence sources or methods'.

The file on Mobilisation for Survival, one of the few American groups opposing both nuclear weapons *and* nuclear energy, is withheld because disclosure would have an inhibitive effect upon the development of policy and administrative direction' or because such documents are the 'work product of an attorney-client relationship'.

A section of the file about the War Resisters League, one of the oldest pacifist groups in the US, is deleted because the FBI considers it part of 'investigatory records compiled for law enforcement purposes, the disclosure of which would . . . reveal the identity of a confidential source'. The FBI's information about the Black United Front – a radical activist group with chapters in several cities which joined the anti-nuclear movement for the 12 June rally – can't be released because that would 'interfere with law enforcement procedings, including pending investigations'. In each case, the FBI decided its files were protected by exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act.

An FBI spokesman would not explain how or why the Act's exemption applied to information about anti-nuclear groups. He could not, for example, provide any evidence showing how Physicians for Social Responsibility might be threatening America's national defence. 'If we start to explain things, that shows you exactly what we're not supposed to be telling you,' he said. 'If we get into those details, we might as well have given you the whole thing.'

Any organisation will be investigated by whatever means the FBI chooses once an allegation of possible illegal activity is reported to the bureau, the spokesman added. The allegation must first be 'validated', whether it comes from a vigilant citizen, another government agency, or 'a janitor at the Xerox company or a bum who sleeps on steam gratings who comes across some information'. He wouldn't reveal what allegations were made against the six peace groups under investigation, or who made the allegations, or whether they were found invalid and the investigations closed. But he did recommend asking members of the suspect organisations: 'You might get some answers from them.'

Whatever they are doing to threaten 'national defence or foreign policy', it's so secret that even the organisations' leaders don't know what it is. None of the targeted groups knew that it was being watched. Ralph DiGia of the War Resisters League had no idea that the FBI has a 'confidential source' planted somewhere in WRL, and Rev Herbert Daughtry, chairman of the Black United Front, was 'rather surprised' that his group was the subject of an FBI law enforcement proceeding. He is taking the matter to his lawyers. Physicians for Social Responsibility have enlisted a lawyer at the American Civil Liberties Union in Washington DC to ask again that the FBI release the material on them. If the files are again denied, the ACLU promised to sue the FBI to

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obtain a court order to release the files.

None of the activists contacted felt that the secret investigations had hindered their work. 'Even if it had an effect,' said Leslie Cagan, co-ordinator of the 12 June Rally Committee, 'we were able to overcome it. We had a very successful demonstration.'

The FBI is supposed to investigate criminal activity, but there is no law in America against talking about disarmament or trying to make it a reality. Even Ronald Reagan says he's for a nuclear freeze. But Reagan and his spies are afraid that anti-nuclear voters could put them out of office. And if Reagan feels the homegrown peace movement is dangerous, the feeling is mutual. 'We are the ones who are improving national defence', said Ed Hedemann of the War Resisters League. 'It's the Reagan administration that is eroding the security of this country.' □

SOVIET UNION

Promises kept

Stephen Cohen explodes the myth of a Soviet 'crisis'

EVERY generation or so, Western opinion embraces a new myth about the Soviet Union. Now it is the 'failure and crisis' of the Soviet system at home. Or, as Flora Lewis of *The New York Times* concluded two years ago, since its creation in 1917 'the Soviet system has had one great success in building military power and has failed its promises in everything else'. That opinion is growing among Americans on both the Right and the Left.

If this picture of a crisis-ridden Soviet regime tottering on the abyss was not so dangerous, it could be dismissed as just another piece of passing foolishness. Unfortunately, it underlies the idea, so popular in the Reagan Administration and other influential circles, that an American policy based on a new arms race and all-out economic warfare will destroy the Soviet Union or 'bring it to its knees'.

Several factors have contributed to the myth of a collapsing Soviet system, once merely a right-wing fantasy. One is an overreaction to wildly exaggerated views of Soviet achievements in the 1930s and again after Sputnik in 1957. Another is the mistaken view that current Polish conditions exist also in the USSR. And yet another is expanded Western press coverage of real Soviet problems since the 1970s, which has portrayed those problems apart from the system's strengths.

It is true, to take several well-publicised examples, that Soviet leaders must cope with declining industrial productivity, an unproductive agriculture, the growing need to pay for huge grain imports with scarce foreign currency, and the increasing difficulty of extracting oil to earn that currency. However, the following is also true: Soviet Gross National Product at least quadrupled between 1950 and 1980: the harvest this year probably will be the best in four years; the system can import grain more cheaply than produce more; and Soviet oil exports to the West are currently up almost 40 per cent.

But the most misleading assertion is that the Soviet Communist system has utterly 'failed' in its basic domestic promises. Lacking any popular achievements, it is suggested, the system has alienated its own citizens to the point of indifference or even rebellion; the government therefore has no consensual relationship with the people, surviving largely or only because of its military and other repressive power.

Nothing I have learned in years of studying and visiting the Soviet Union, including from many sober-minded dissidents, truly supports that picture. Nor would we imagine it to be true of other long-lived political systems, which always develop new sources of stability in old historical conditions. All stable systems, even ones as repressive as the Soviet Union can be, involve some fundamental social contract between rulers and ruled – some basic promises and expectations fulfilled or at worst deferred.

What are the basic promises, the actual ideological meaning, of Soviet Communism at home? As is clear from both the official ideology and officially-sponsored public opinion polls, those promises have far less to do with millennial or libertarian aspects of original marxism than with far more earthly appeals to the Soviet people that have evolved in modern times. At home, Soviet Communism really means official promises of national security (the country will never again be defenceless as it was in 1941), nationalism, law-and-order safeguards against 'anarchy' (which so many Russians fear), cradle-to-grave welfarism, and a better material life for each generation.

Has the Soviet system really 'failed' in these commitments? It has amply fulfilled, or over-fulfilled, the promises of national security and law and order. Russian nationalist-patriotic themes have been integrated into official Marxism-Leninism for 40 years, and never so firmly as now. Despite important inadequacies and official exaggerations, a comprehensive welfare system has been created that includes free secondary education, health care, pensions, and subsidised housing and food for virtually all citizens. And despite widespread privilege, corruption, shortages, and a smaller rise in the growth of consumption in recent years, ordinary citizens live better in most material ways than ever before.

Emphasising the historical costs of these accomplishments, or contrasting frugal Soviet living standards with American ones, is beside the point. What matters politically is that Soviet adults know these standards and welfare provisions did not exist in their country 50 years ago or less, when illiteracy and famine were rampant. Therefore, they regard them as historic achievements of the Soviet system, as Communist promises at least partially fulfilled.

On the other hand, historical achievements usually do not satisfy later generations. Rapid social mobility is no longer commonplace in the Soviet Union, and economic stagnation and military expenditures are already in conflict with higher consumer expectations. These and other problems, including alcoholism, negative demographic trends, and national sentiments among non-Slavic peoples, may one day erode the government's social contract with the people and its stability. But to assume that it will happen soon, or must happen, is to underestimate the system's reformist potential and social support. Even the official conservatism that blocks reform is a popular attitude, and thus another bond between state and society.

A Soviet emigré to the United States recently expressed surprise at the opinion that 'almost all Soviet people are anti-Communist and hate Soviet power'. In an article recounting conversations with many 'typical representatives of Soviet people at all levels', he called this view a 'self-deception'. Instead of dangerously deceiving ourselves about the Soviet Union's 'crisis' we should ask ourselves why a system with so many problems is so stable. The answer may lead us to wiser and more compassionate policies. □

Stephen F. Cohen is Professor of Politics at Princeton University and writes a monthly column on Soviet affairs for The Nation.

AUSTRALIA

Let us spray

Simon Walker studies a graffiti campaign

THEY CALL themselves 'Billboard Utilising Graffitists against Unhealthy Promotions'. It's not a euphonious title. But the initials spell 'BUGA UP'. When its spray-can wielding supporters spot an 'unhealthy promotion', that's exactly what they do to it.

BUGA UP is an Australian group against alcohol and tobacco advertising. Unlike similar organisations which merely campaign for a tightening up of restrictions on advertisements, BUGA UP takes direct action. Members use spray-cans and paintbrushes on billboards by dead of night. Early morning commuters will read 'smoke, choke, croak' or 'suck, muck, yuck' on the advertising message.

Unsurprisingly, Australian advertisers and billboard owners are outraged. Members of BUGA UP are 'urban hooligans', according to the Outdoor Advertising Association. Their 'subversion' and 'sacrilege' is costing hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. Removing a single line of graffiti can cost $200, and the advent of the pressurised

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paint spray-can – a tool which has revolutionised graffiti – brings Sydney cleaning companies up to $8,000 a month in fees.

Billboard owners aren't mollified by BUGA UP's helpful offer to down spray-cans if companies buy only half-hoardings, leaving one side of advertisements freely for public comment. 'If we listened to all the ratbag elements like BUGA UP,' says Australian Posters' Brian Tyquin, 'we might as well give up.'

BUGA UP began in 1979 with three members. Now it has well over 100 participants in its nightly raids, including doctors, lawyers and academics. All a prospective recruit requires is a spray-can, although the more cautious practioners often carry a £50 bail-bond, just in case they're picked up by an unsympathetic police officer. The more technologically minded have been known to carry walkie-talkies so they can stay in touch with look-outs. Really ambitious 'spray-can guerillas' use extension rods and other aids to get at high boards, although, as one member admits, 'you can't help being conspicious if you're walking around at night carrying a ladder.'

The organisation actually advertised for help last year: 'Our few phantom sprayers are overworked. New recruits are needed. Plenty of good territories available.' The group certainly has room for expansion: there are over 30,000 billboards across Australia.

BUGA UP members are opposed to all billboard advertisements; they regard the outdoor advertising industry as unsympathetic to the environment. But tobacco and alcohol are the main targets. One of the organisation's founders, Sydney broadcaster Fred Cole, claims that most smokers sincerely want to give up but are discouraged by heavy advertising. He is particularly scathing about the Australian media's role in promoting smoking. He claims that sponsorship allows cigarette company names and logos to appear on television 40,000 times each cricket season, despite the fact that advertising cigarettes on TV is illegal.

Cole is angered by the fact that BUGA UP is prosecuted for defacing hoardings. 'It's tragic. In the law's view property is sacrosanct and human life isn't.' But the graffitists are not without friends at court. One magistrate who convicted a doctor for wilful damage remarked that 'you can wear your conviction as a badge of honour'. He refused to award damages to the prosecuting cigarette company, saying 'they can well afford it themselves'. A judge spoke of his great sympathy for anyone campaigning against 'the evil of cigarette smoking' before ordering a defendant to pay $35 for a 'crime of the highest idealistic nature'.

BUGA UP tries to use humour and existing lettering in its additions to advertisements. Dunhill becomes 'Lung ill', Rothmans is 'Rot Mans' and 'one for the road' is echoed by 'one for the morgue'. A favourite slogan is 'pickle your liver, pike on your lover'.

The group's most successful promotion was the 'MarbleRow Man' complete with tracheotomy and wheelchair. It mocked Philip Morris's Marlboro Man competition which sought an Australian 'with strong and distinctively individual masculinity'. Studies had shown an almost universal recall of advertising for Marlboro cigarettes among 10 and 11 year old children, and the brand was a prefered one among adolescents. A group of Sydney health workers active in BUGA UP used a look-alike poster of a willing patient who smoked through his tracheotomy tube to ridicule the Philip Morris campaign. In the event the 'Marlboro Man' contest proved a disaster and the presentation of the $25,000 first prize had to be held in secret. By contrast BUGA UP's 'MarbleRow Man' made the cover of the *Australian Medical Journal*.

Most BUGA UP activists feel less strongly about liquor advertising, though one member, whose father died of alcohol-related illnesses, concentrates on booze advertisements. While Fred Cole dissociates himself from what he calls 'claptrap' from the temperance movement, BUGA UP strongly oppose ads designed to associate liquor with sporting or sexual prowess, or a successful lifestyle.

Bryan Simpson of the Tobacco Industry of Australia optimistically believes that BUGA UP is merely a 'passing phase'. One business executive has denounced the group as 'a problem to society as a whole. Their defacement of private property unequivocally categorises them as vandals, nothing more'. Meanwhile the Attorney General of New South Wales has told advertisers that his department can offer 'no practical assistance' in combatting BUGA UP.

BUGA UP's own demand is unequivocal: a complete ban on all outdoor and media advertising of alcohol and cigarettes. Asked by a prosecutor if there was any penalty that might deter him from future re-touching of advertisements, Fred Cole replied that 'a life sentence might'. Six BUGA UP members have, in fact, served short jail terms for refusing to pay fines.

At present public sentiment seems to be strongly with the 'billboard utilising graffitists'. In Sydney last year thousands of pedestrians cheered three men who spent severals hours defacing a giant cigarette billboard – 5 by 15 metres – on top of a five-storey building. The group continues to attract volunteers, and several of its hardened activists have acquired folk-hero status. A new organisation, GAS – for Graffitists Against Sexism – now patrols another genre of outdoor advertising. In Britain COUGH UP (Citizens Organisation Using Graffiti To Halt Unhealthy Promotions) is taking on tobacco advertisers.

By now BUGA UP is almost part of the establishment. Two hundred advertising executives paid $22 a head to hear Fred Cole address a Melbourne Art Directors' Club lunch. One ad man was so moved that he immediately announced his withdrawal from a cigarette campaign to be launched in Papua New Guinea.

Even if the Australian tobacco industry continues to thwart legislative controls on its media presentation, increasing public concern is likely to limit its advertising potential. One might say the writing is on the wall. □

SRI LANKA

Entering the fray

Francis Wheen reports on fears of more violence

AFTER TWO weeks of murderous attacks on Tamils in Sri Lanka, which have left hundreds dead and many thousands homeless, there is now a possibility that other countries may enter the conflict. On Monday this week UPI reported that President Jayewardene had requested military assistance from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Britain and the USA; it added that Pakistan and Bangladesh had 'responded positively'.

The Sri Lankan government immediately denied the report and expelled the correspondent who had written it. A Foreign Office spokesperson in London told the *NS* that 'the Sri Lankans have taken soundings on assistance, but we're not prepared to go into details about what sort of assistance they were taking soundings on'. But he denied that Britain had been asked for military assistance.

Even if Britain does keep its distance, there is no guarantee that the countries of the Indian sub-continent will do likewise. Many Indians are now urging Mrs Gandhi to send troops to northern Sri Lanka to protect the Tamils there. She has resisted these calls, but if forces from Pakistan or Bangladesh were to arrive in the island by official invitation, President Jayewardene's warning of an 'Indian invasion' could become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Even if things do not go that far, relations between India and Sri Lanka will still have been seriously damaged by the events of the last fortnight. India has accused the Sri Lankan authorities of failing to stop the violence; Sri Lanka, in turn, has accused India of giving aid and comfort to Tamil separatists.

One cannot but admire the creativity shown by the Jayewardene government in finding scapegoats for the violence against Tamils. Apart from blaming the Tamils themselves (and their Indian friends) it has also suggested that the Soviet Union, the Vatican and Amnesty International are responsible.

The Tamils themselves are more interested in preserving life and limb than in taking orders from Yuri Andropov. There are now at least 75,000 Tamil refugees in 17 camps around Colombo, and they are worried that the army may not protect them from attack. Two boatloads of Tamils have already been ferried to the comparative safety of northern Sri Lanka, but at this rate of progress it will take at least a month and a half for all the refugees to be evacuated. □

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BRETECHER

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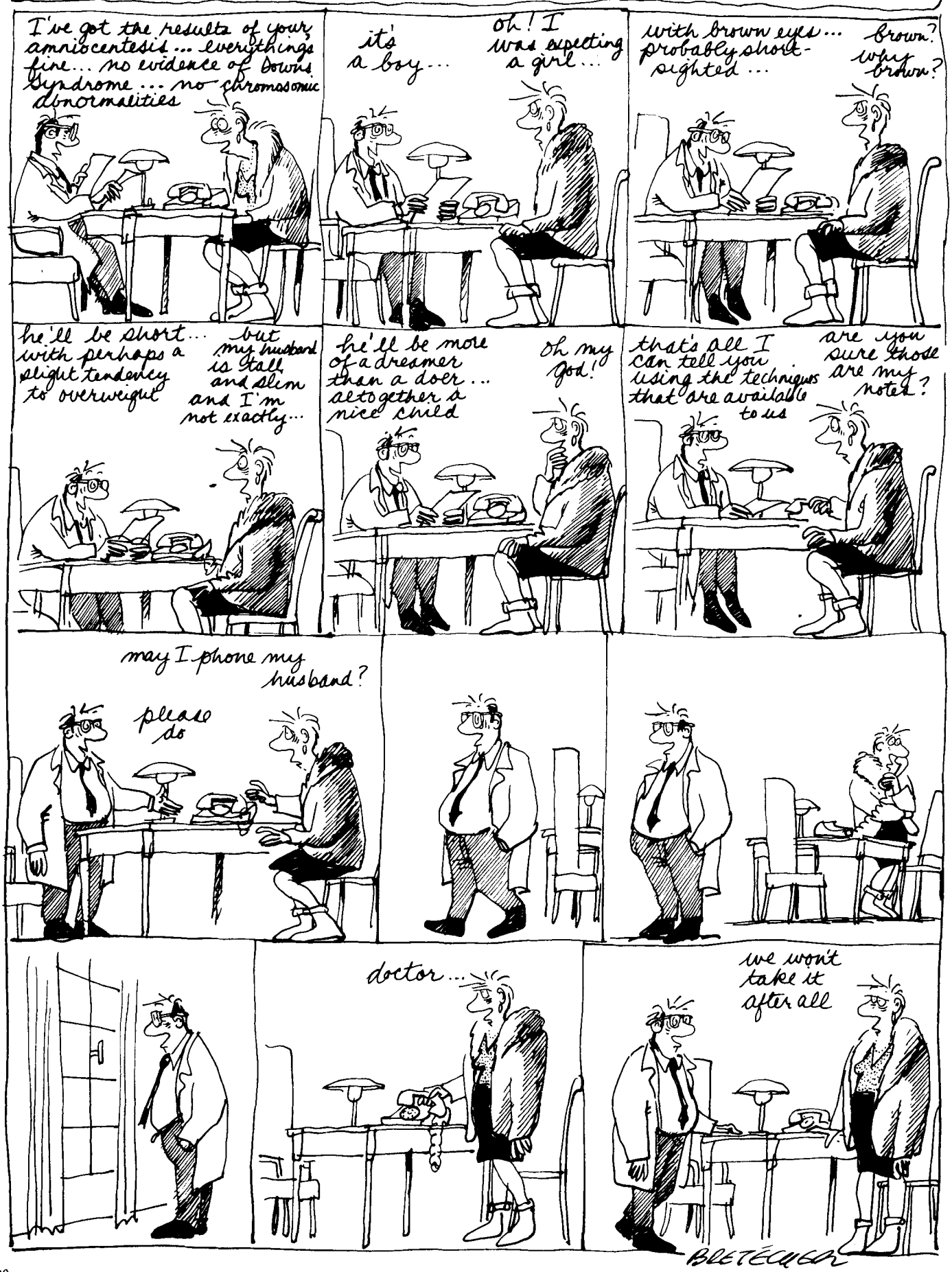
I've got the results of your amniocentesis... everything's fine... no evidence of Down's Syndrome... no chromosomic abnormalities
it's a boy...
Oh! I was expecting a girl...
with brown eyes... probably short-sighted...
Brown? why brown?
he'll be short... with perhaps a slight tendency to overweight
but my husband is tall and slim and I'm not exactly...
he'll be more of a dreamer than a doer... altogether a nice child
Oh my God!
that's all I can tell you using the techniques that are available to us
are you sure those are my notes?
may I phone my husband?
please do
doctor...
we won't take it after all
BRETECHER

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LETTERS

Consistent policies for Labour

Michael Meacher MP, House of Commons

You say (editorial, 22 July), without a shred of back-up evidence, that 'it would kill at a stroke Labour's chances of winning the next election if Michael Meacher was to be elected as his (Kinnock's) deputy', reflecting trends in the Party 'not collectively concerned with making Labour once again the political expression of a new majority coalition'.

If this circumlocution means anything, it presumably implies either

(i) we will lose future elections, like we lost the last one, if we stick to radical policies; or
(ii) a Kinnock-Meacher ticket is a Left-Left combination which sacrifices the factional balance necessary to get majority support in the country; or
(iii) Kinnock-Meacher, or at least Meacher, is more interested in doctrinal purity than the pursuit of power, or is anyway too rigidly committed to fixed policy positions irrespective of the electorate's demands.

With all three of these implications you couldn't be more wrong.

We didn't lose the election because the policies were too radical, but because (a) they were never systematically put across and campaigned for, or (b) they were perverted out of recognition (e.g. Labour would leave Britain defenceless).

We've already tried a factional balance in the leadership over the last three years, and it clearly didn't work. A Kinnock-Meacher ticket, on the other hand, essentially a Centre-Left stance, would provide – what the Labour Party needs more desperately than anything else to carry conviction in the country – a united and consistent voice.

Nobody is more committed to destroying Thatcherism than I, but large-scale jettisoning of policies is not the way. Adjustment, reappraisal and development of the policies, however, I have always believed necessary and encouraged.

Is it too much to ask that your prejudices will not in future stand in the way of rational analysis?

A genuine deputy

Richard Balfe MEP, London SE18

I was surprised at the editorial (*NS* 22 July) on the subject of the deputy leadership of the Labour Party.

Surely one of the strongest reasons for voting for Michael Meacher is that he would genuinely be a deputy and not an alternative leader. I have talked to many of my constituents and they do not feel party unity is best served by having as deputy leader a person who is in effect the alternative leader of the Party, albeit an alternative with minority support.

There have been four occasions in the last 20 years when the deputy leader has clearly been out of tune with the leader of the Labour Party. These were Wilson/Brown, Wilson/Jenkins, Callaghan/Foot and Foot/Healey. In all instances, the one thing that has been painfully clear is that the two figures concerned did not trust each other.

If Labour is to prosper, what we surely need is a deputy leader who will 'look after the shop', back up the boss and not be seen or see himself as a challenge to the leader. This is quite compatible with other leading members of the Party – e.g., Roy Hattersley, Peter Shore, continuing to hold senior positions within the Shadow Cabinet, possibly even senior to that of the deputy leader – but if we are to end the internecine warfare in the Labour Party, I believe the deputy must be a deputy.

Only Michael Meacher fulfils that criterion.

Sex, politics and fatties

Nicky Bird, London W4

L. J. Boughey, who is clearly a hideous fatty, winges (Letters 22 July) about people being horrid to obese persons and that tasteless references are one remove from the gas chamber. Boughey then moans that it is all a capitalist plot, that in the Socialist Utopia fatties would be regarded as the wonderful and beautiful people they are. Boughey ends with the usual swipes at the media and the wholefood mafia brainwashing the public to sneer at blubber-bellies.

In my experience (I speak as one given to indolence, greed and thus corpulence) most fatties are fat because they eat too much. Socialist fatties are therefore by definition hypocritical because they are taking the bread out of the mouths of the starving millions. If Mr (or Ms) Boughey has got a thyroid problem then I grovel unreservedly, but one should beware – like middleclass parents of half-witted children who blame dyslexia for bad exam results – too many fatties who gobble endless sweeties bemoan their thyroid condition or big bones.

The truth is, there is no capitalist conspiracy. We spend much of our life in bed, often with another person. Going to bed with fat people can be a cumbersome and unattractive affair. Having been fat on top and thin underneath I can confirm that being fat in bed is as impractical for the fatty as it is unpleasant for the recipient.

In the name of Socialism I advise fat L. J. Boughey to eat less. Otherwise he or she will die young and celibate and won't be saved by predictable squeaks about the elitist media.

David Rose, Time Out, London WC2

I must make a rejoinder to L. J. Boughey's intemperate and misguided response to my letter about running (Letters 22 July). Any unfit socialist not disqualified from exercise for medical reasons fully deserves to feel guilty, and this has nothing to do with 'Californian' bourgeois delusions. I and many others train not for self-centred reasons but to make us more able to play a full role, mentally and physically, in the struggle for socialism. Personal health, at least prophylactic personal health, is more than the invention of capital colour supplement writers. Comrades who run find themselves with a lower pulse rate, and hence less prone to circulatory disease; they find it easy to stop smoking, function with less sleep and are able to apply themselves to political tasks with greater energy. They are also better equipped to deal with long demonstrations, even during extreme weather conditions.

Spirit of steel

K. L. Jones, Divisional Organiser, No. 3 Division, Iron & Steel Trades Confederation, Rotherham, S. Yorks.

I write in response to the article by John Hatton entitled 'Shrinking Steel' (*NS* 1 July). The article refers to 'the ISTC's defeat in the week-long Rotherham Steel strike in April'. I was the Co-ordinator of that strike and would like to point out to your readers the facts about it.

The dispute did, indeed, begin at the BSC's Rotherham works, but quickly spread to all BSC plants in South Yorkshire. Steel pickets were on the Tinsley Park works within one hour and by nightfall on the first day production in most plants had ceased, including stainless steel production at the Shepcote Lane site. By the following day, all BSC plants were on strike at Templeborough and Aldwarke in Rotherham, at Tinsley Park, Shepcote Lane and at Stocksbridge. For ten days there was no liquid steel production in the BSC throughout South Yorkshire.

This was and remains the *only* strike taken against the closure and redundancy policies of the former Chairman of the BSC, Ian MacGregor, who merely continued the policies of his predecessors, Monty Finniston and Charles Villiers. It demonstrated that the spirit which had made South Yorkshire the leaders of the 1980 steel strike remains alive.

Furthermore, the April 1983 strike was eventually extended to include Scunthorpe and, later, BSC plant in Wolverhampton and could have escalated to a major opposition to BSC and government policies for the steel industry. To call such a magnificent effort a 'defeat' and later a 'debacle' is journalistic adventurism of the lowest kind.

While there is a single group of workers prepared to stand, then neither Conservative government dictators, Whitehall mandarins, nor BSC executives can easily do what they will with the British steel industry. There is still a British steel industry, and there is a workforce prepared, given the right to leadership, to fight for its retention and its return to full public ownership with more democratic control, following the re-election of a Labour government in 1988, or before.

I would have preferred it if your article had taken this more positive and accurate view.

Addled brains

Brian Donald, Kirkcaldy, Fife

May I be permitted to reply to Mr Donald Wood of Powys who has asserted (Letters 29 July) that involvement in professional boxing invalidates my claim to be a socialist.

Few men have given greater commitment to socialism than the Rt Hon Emanuel Shinwell, yet, in a signed article in *Boxing News* for 20 May 1955, Mr Shinwell assured boxing fans: 'Labour Party against Tax on Boxing'. The article also pointed out that the Labour Party had proposed the removal of Entertainment Tax on Boxing. Mr Shinwell went on to say: 'Despite the desire of some people to make an end of boxing I have little doubt that it will continue . . . the natural desire of young men to engage in the sport will not be discouraged by those who shrink from physical combat but who have no hesitation in inflicting mental injury in the course of political or other forms of controversy.'

What the British Board of Boxing Control does achieve can best be summarised by these words of Alexander Pope:

> Between excess and famine lies a mean
> Plain but not sordid; though not splendid, clean.

Civilisation will only grow away from boxing when the utter complexity of 'humani genus' has been abolished – but, by then, it won't matter. ▷

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Finally, 'cool' millionaire was a misprint. In my original letter I wrote 'coal millionaire'.

Ron Salmon, Hampstead

Donald Wood's statement (Letters 29 July) that 'Business, jazz and rugby football can all be used to gull the gullible and undoubtedly kill' is totally incomprehensible to me. Presumably anything can be used to gull the gullible (whatever that may mean); but to kill?

How on earth can jazz be 'used to kill'? To start with this implies an agent, a user. Certainly, as Brian Donald observed, jazz musicians have died from drugs and alcohol. So too have many doctors, lawyers, shop assistants and factory workers. And I would guess that more jazz musicians have died from diseases associated with poverty than from indulgence. But it certainly isn't the jazz that kills, any more than baroque organ music does.

As well say that cricket causes hay fever. After all, it's played outdoors in the summer.

Mr T. C. Basset, London SW16

I was interested to hear Mr Jim Mulligan's concern for the great Muhammad (not Mohammed) Ali's present wellbeing, as well as the adverse view that he expressed regarding professional boxing (*NS* 15 July). Allow me to make clear that I, as a boxing supporter, cannot morally justify the intent, which is to land blows to the upper part of the body and to cause another harm. Seeing as the *New Statesman* devoted its front cover to this one-sided argument, the ugly side of boxing, I would like to point out the far outweighing good side to the sport.

Perhaps Muhammad Ali does have brain damage: this has never been proven. His senses have dulled, partly through age, but he is still capable of giving better interviews than most MPs (particularly since the influx of new Tories in the house). But Ali has received world-wide fame, immense fortune and a place among mankind's elite of inspirational heroes. Take away boxing and, as a black man in Kentucky, Ali may have lived out an obscure existence, working for a pittance in a plantation owner's cotton field. Another boxer, Roberto Duran, is worshipped by the millions of Panama and admired around the world. Before, Duran was defending his shoe-shine 'patch' with a flick knife. Boxing made Roberto Duran into a survivor. From where he came, it was commonplace to find a dead kid lying in the gutter, he said.

Many of today's boxers would have turned to crime if boxing was abolished, indeed many are in fact reformed criminals. Underprivileged people have already a limited freedom of choice without another being denied to them.

There once was a time when boxing was illegal. Do you remember the 'bare knuckle' fights? The BMA and the SDP evidently do not. I put it to them, and anyone else who thinks banning boxing is the answer, that their action would give rise to a great number of 'bare knuckle' fights, causing horrific injuries, multiplied by rule-flouting, blatant mis-matching and lack of suitable medical supervision. Modern referees often stop bouts well before a boxer is knocked unconscious. Would this happen in those illegal affairs?

The intent in boxing is not, I repeat not, to cause your opponent brain damage. The cases of punch-drunk fighters and any other permanent or lasting injuries are not incidental, but accidental. The cause is the same in motor-racing crashes, which are attained through driving at reckless speeds. The BMA will also inform you that, in football, 'heading' the ball causes brain damage.

Boxing, though not safe, is safer than ever in its existence (in Ancient Rome, boxers wore spiked, iron gloves). It has taken three decades to arrive at this point, where fighters are regularly checked, given brain scans (free of charge), issued identity cards, suspended after knock-outs, protected by sensible referees, matched more evenly by promoters and so on. All this advancement has occurred since the legalisation of boxing. To ban boxing would throw away 60 years of reforms.

Towards the end of Mr Mulligan's piece, he hinted at the real issue, and perhaps the solution. He was critical of the British Boxing Board of Control's insurance policy to cover injuries. What boxing really needs is a Boxing Union to protect fighters. Just as a Union has brought about safer conditions, better pay, pension schemes, etc, from an employer, so it, too, could work for boxing. The Union should work for a 'closed shop' in boxing, with a proper wages structure and stringent safety requirements. Eventually, politics within the sport could become eradicated, ensuring fairer rating systems to thrive.

So, to all concerned humanitarians, if you really wish to aid the boxers, more control, better management and a fighter's own union, to look after their rights.

Spike

Pauline Scudamore, 8 Upper Cheyne Row, London SW3

I have been commissioned to write an authorised life of Spike Milligan, humorist and writer. I should be glad to hear from anyone with memories of Spike, and to have a sight of any letters or relevant papers. All documents will be copied and returned promptly.

Victims of conscience

D. K. R. Phillips, Press Officer, British Nuclear Fuels

The description of Mr John Taylor as 'another victim of the nuclear industry, forced out, he believes, because of his attempts to improve safety conditions' (*NS* 22 July) bears no resemblance to the independent assessment of his dismissal from British Nuclear Fuels Limited.

The author of the article, Rob Edwards, surprisingly makes no attempt to explain why the Industrial Tribunal which considered Mr Taylor's case decided unanimously that his complaint of unfair dismissal failed.

Furthermore, in his summing-up, the chairman, Mr P. A. Goodall, made specific reference to the applicant's allegations regarding safety and said: 'We understand that this aspect of the case has received considerable publicity in the media and we trust our finding that it was unfounded will receive equal publicity. Whilst questions concerning nuclear safety are a legitimate matter for public concern, it is equally in the public interest that fears which have been publicised and which prove to be unfounded should be publicly allayed.'

How curiously inconsistent of Mr Edwards that he should imply that Mr Taylor was dismissed for not being allowed to make information public, yet, at the same time, readers of the *New Statesman* are denied facts highly relevant to the story.

Rob Edwards writes: In his summing-up of the Industrial Tribunal, Mr Goodall also says (in relation to John Taylor's allegations): '. . . it is not within the province of the Industrial Tribunal to determine such scientific and technical questions, nor would it be within our competence if it were within our province.' If they do not understand the technical issues, how can they affirm that doubts about safety are 'unfounded'? Mr Phillips also describes Mr Taylor's departure as a 'dismissal', although BNFL argued at the Tribunal that he was not actually dismissed. Are BNFL now admitting that they forced him out?

Designers' dilemma

Steve Little, London SW7

In 'Fruits of Education' (*NS* 15 July) Jules Lubbock creates a false dichotomy between the Royal College of Art and other institutions based on highly selective comparisons of work from two degree shows.

The work quoted with approval from the Central School of Art and Design can be matched by other colleges including the RCA. The real 'crisis' at the latter is the difficulty of resolving the institution's original direction to industry by central government with the studio tradition of personal preparation for the marketing of individual skills. While the present Rector frequently invokes this original role, the divide between studio and theoretical departments predates his appointment.

It is disingenuous to invoke simplistic solutions like strong leadership for such a fundamental problem. Citing the example of Italy where the industrial clients of 'brilliant post-war design' were the pre-war underpinning of Mussolini's regime is no contribution to a socialist theory of design. Italian design draws heavily on the output of the architecture schools; as an architect I would not recommend emulating this example. In any case, an entirely post-graduate School of Design has just been established there.

Lubbock rightly argues, in his final paragraph, that design is ultimately about social relationships, not simply constructed objects, and that vocational design courses, by their very nature, are ill equipped to deal with these.

At the RCA the work of the Faculty of Theoretical Studies addresses precisely such issues. Much of this work is at doctoral level and, increasingly, funded by the research councils, not the DES subvention to which Lubbock frequently alludes.

With this faculty the Design Education Unit goes one better than his suggestion of spending the DES money on the education of managers by developing the teaching of design to primary and secondary school students as the future clients and users of designed products. The Department of Cultural History is able to examine the development of the present situation in depth.

The Department of Design Research, containing professional designers and non-vocational graduates, takes a multi-disciplinary approach to the development of a philosophical underpinning for design within the frame of human action and the examination of design management, systems and technology.

Last summer, in conjunction with the Design Council and the Design Research Society, this Department organised a major international conference on 'Design Policy' which mapped the boundaries of a discourse encompassing the issues raised by the Lucas Plan and the product and technology development programmes sponsored by MITI in Japan.

The discourse suggested by Lubbock is being developed within 'Britain's leading centre for post-graduate training in design'; however, since it is not concerned with the superficial appearance of objects, or with individual personalities, it avoids the attention or advice attracted by what are in fact symptoms of the problem it is tackling.

To our readers

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John Lucas

A mouthful of pebbles

Collected Poems 1971-1983
DONALD DAVIE *Carcanet* £5.95
Bump-Starting the Hearse
KIT WRIGHT *Hutchinson* £4.95
Changing Sides
JOHN LEVETT *Peterloo* £3
Opening the Hand
W. S. MERWIN *Atheneum* $13.95 & $6.95

If POEMS were made solely of ideas there would be few more interesting poets than Donald Davie. For his seriousness about ideas is never in doubt: he ponders, questions, argues with himself and others, and it seems inevitable that, reading him, you want to argue back. Davie's **Collected Poems** is, in short, remarkable for its prose virtues, although these have more to do with articulate energy than with purity of diction. For he can be very clumsy and his ear is by no means true. This is especially the case whenever he tries to move towards the colloquial or the demotic. It is not merely that his lines lack grace, or that they quite fail to suggest an attentiveness to those rhythms that imply human depths tapped through speech utterance. It is also that although he requires us to be good listeners he is not a good listener himself. This is perhaps a consequence of his donnishness, of a literariness that seems ill at ease with the familiar. At all events there are some remarkably phoney moments in his poetry. 'The beery ram that mounted/His niece and, hissing "Belt up", had her.' How do you *hiss* 'Belt up'? And can you really believe in the desire of a poet to make it new who writes of 'a hulking great villain' or who carelessly repeats 'there's' 'theirs' and 'there's' in the space of three lines?

Well, yes, you can. Because set against these faults, and in spite of a lack of canorousness so great that trying to speak his lines you often feel as though you have a mouth full of pebbles, there are those undeniable merits that keep you reading. In fact, Davie is very readable, perhaps because his literary, donnish qualities compel him to take the reader seriously, so that although you often feel talked at you never feel talked down to. I do not intend this to be faint praise. There are not many poets who can communicate such passionate interest in the written word or who can match Davie's searching out of a variety of frequently surprising verse forms and prosodic techniques, all of which he puts to exhilarating use. At his best Davie is an ambassador for poetry and, whether abrasive or courteous, always candid, open, vulnerable even. Of the poems new to me in this collection I particularly admire 'Artifax in Extremis', 'Well-Found Poem' and 'Catullus on Friendship', with its inimitable, rasping, half-affectionate, half-maddened tone, its very real testimony to the exactions required by a marriage of minds.

Kit Wright is also something of an ambassador. In his 'Birthday Poem for Gavin Ewart' he speaks, part-mockingly perhaps, of their 'Great Debate/Of craft and its possessors', and there is no doubt that Wright is a highly skilled craftsman. **Bump-Starting the Hearse** is an improvement on his previous volume, *The Bear Looked Over the Mountain* (although Wright still can't spell John Crowe Ransom's name) because he is now prepared to test his skills on a more demanding variety of subjects. He is, of course, a genuinely funny poet. 'Underneath the Archers or What's All This About Walter's Willy' deserves to be in any anthology of comic verse, and so does 'Personal Advertisement'. But his best poems are those in which his conscience prompts him to a hard, tensile precision of statement. 'Frankie and Johnny in 1955' (about Ruth Ellis) and 'The Losing of Liverpool' are especially good in this respect and at least two other poems make you feel that Wright's is the sort of poetry that could make something happen. Imagine the effect of pinning up 'Agony Calories' in a fish restaurant:

> The cooling seaward echo of his screams
> Locked in the flesh:
>
> Succulent beyond dream, a live-boiled lobster,
> Terror fresh!
>
> How much pain can you eat?

That's how it begins and by the time it finishes I suspect even the most dedicated of diners might be mulling over the advantages of a vegetarian diet. And shouldn't 'I Found South African Breweries Most Hospitable' be sent to all those MCC members who chumble on about the need to keep politics out of sport? 'They keep falling out of the window they must be clumsy/And unprofessional not that anyone told me.' In its wit, decency and craft, *Bump-Starting the Hearse* ought to be compulsory reading for all those who believe that art stifles the true voice of feeling.

Davie and Wright

It's a belief which makes better sense when you come to **Changing Sides.** Open John Levett's book at any page and you are sure to find something to admire. He is a careful, assiduous writer, and his poems of domestic or occasional events are frequently redeemed from dullness by an accuracy of observation which flickers with visionary possibilities. Poems such as 'The Insect House' and 'Whistlers' have about them a discreet grace which at first glance seems very appealing. But the more you read Levett the more you begin to worry. There are simply too many adjectives, too many plodding pentameter lines, too many respectable but unsurprising images. 'Across the way the fumes from an exhaust/Take form beside an open metal gate/As vaporous and shapeless as a ghost.' Strike out the unwanted words from those three lines and there'd be very little left. In addition, Levett's determination to rhyme leads him into slackness of phrasing and of cadence, and this is too high a price to pay for rhymes which are rarely more than dutiful. Yet he is a genuine poet, and he will become a good one once he can nerve himself to chip away all the fustian that at the moment clutters up his imagination.

By contrast **Opening the Hand** is remarkable for the way in which W. S. Merwin allows each poem to dictate its form. Since his work springs out of a Whitman-like embracing of experiences great and small, this means that much of the volume is occupied with the kinds of casual notations that rely for their veracity on a rhythmic freshness; and unfortunately I cannot always 'hear' Merwin's rhythms. I also find that I quickly tire of poems that insist on living in the present: 'Of tomorrow I have nothing to say/What I say is not tomorrow' ('The Night Surf') is about as wise and witty as 'Whatever I talk about is yesterday/by the time I see anything it is gone', i.e. not at all. On the other hand the opening sequence, about family matters, is genuinely alert and engaging, and 'Questions To Tourists Stopped By A Pineapple Field' is at once funny and menacing, a truly original poem. □

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FICTION
Grace Ingoldby

Worlds apart

Another Time, Another Place
JESSIE KESSON *Chatto* £6.95 & £2.95
Heartburn
NORA EPHRON *Heinemann* £7.95
The Slipstream
IAN COCHRANE *Gollancz* £7.95

The intoxicating danger of strangers, in this case three Italian PoWs billeted on a remote Scottish farm in 1944, is the central theme of **Another Time, Another Place**. One Italian anywhere is enough to give a girl ideas; for Janie, the young cottar wife asked to 'do' for her new neighbours, three foreign bodies living and breathing right next door really rocks the boat. 'Nothing to look', they wail, and Janie, seeing through their eyes, must admit that the prospect is indeed bleak. The cottars are tied to their houses and into each other in a world of tatties and turnips, wind and rain, and now further immobilised by the 'stand still' order which prevents farm workers from leaving the land. Money is scarce, work is tough, life is punctuated by the weekly visit of the grocer's van. Moreover, this isolated community has a lethal cutting edge; 'conform or be damned' might be the motto here in what amounts to a minefield of sanctions, codes, unwritten rules. How to behave in the potato field, how to desport oneself at the harvest dance which falls a lot short of the Highland Fling:

> Even on social occasions like this neither frill nor ribbon put forth a frivolous claim, no innocent coquetries, no small vanities. It was as if the whole chapter of their youth had been torn from their book, and they had turned the page from childhood to middle-age.

Who then are the prisoners here? The Italians with their friends and 'buckshee' bikes or Janie, young, married, thwarted, isolated, stuck? The PoWs, like locusts, arrive, devastate, but eventually move on . . . With consummate ease and modesty Kesson creates the universal from these particulars; her portrait of this tiny, remote, working world, brightened by vivid language, balanced by first-hand knowledge, fastens on the mind like a fish hook.

It is tempting to wonder what might have become of Kesson's Janie if she had borrowed a copy of **Heartburn** from the travelling library van. The author is an established American journalist and her first novel, billed as 'painfully honest, wickedly observant', falls neatly into the American tradition of 'handy hints', 'home truths', 'what to do with the left overs'. *Heartburn* will tell you how to remove those stubborn stains, how to pinpoint the end of the affair and how to change your life or, more precisely, your husband. It is written in the first person – I'm really only chatting, this is by-the-by – and takes some time to get right to the point. Rachel is a pregnant cookery writer married to a Washington newspaper columnist who deceives her with the wife of the US Under Secretary of State for Middle Eastern Affairs ('Guess the face behind the fiction . . .'). In a series of flashbacks and asides and after a mugging and a caesarian section, we learn almost incidentally where it all went wrong this time and why and what she intends to do about it. However fashionably dressed, this is the old, old story: men are schmucks (what's new?) and women, even divorcées who've been 'in' group therapy, are very vulnerable. The female Achilles heel is barely covered by the natty jogging sock, tell them you love them and actually want to MARRY them, in this case on the Eastern shuttle from New York, and then just watch them fall! Really this is rather a dull portrait of Washington society circa 1980.

It is, however, a triple-purpose book; you may read it, use it to balance a rickety table or cook with it, for, like Vonnegut's latest novel, it is punctuated by recipes, an added bonus that makes one wish Jane Austen had been generous enough to include tips on how to trim a bonnet, George Eliot given us the low-down on how to boil the curate's egg. However, if Nora Ephron or her heroine have suffered it has not been in vain. I now know that American Express tabs and old phone bills will provide a more detailed picture of adultery than lipstick on the collar; moreover, I shall henceforth beware of men that cry:

> It's true that men who cry are sensitive to and in touch with their feelings, but the only feelings they tend to be sensitive to and in touch with are their own.

The Slipstream concerns a few days in the life of Ron and his friends, young, unemployed, out of luck in London, victims of circumstances they no longer have the energy to confront or the power to overturn. The action, or lack of it, takes place in pubs where they get drunk, on the streets where they get into trouble, and in bedsitters where they get maudlin, get laid, get involved in the circuitious conversation. In Cochrane's novel boredom is relentless, resourcelessness is a creeping disability, energy is only momentarily beefed-up by a stolen supermarket steak. Ron won't paint that picture and Denis isn't going to be a star; Miss Allen, whom Ron visits when he or she is feeling randy, is really very near the edge. Somehow in all this gloom Cochrane has created a really funny book which is curiously innocent, remarkably economical and always utterly convincing. □

Stephen Romer

Sea-changes

The novices drink and smoke or stand
on deck, blinded by the rhetoric
of a riding moon with clouds. Our wake
is white, a crumpled parachute
spreading out behind.

Grown used to this journey through the night,
wrapped in a coat, curled on a seat,
I ask only for a heart as constant
as the throbbing of this ship and strong
for each new sickening of the sea.

FEMINISM
Sara Maitland

Then and now

Dreams and Dilemmas
SHEILA ROWBOTHAM *Virago* £4.95

> I don't see this as a matter of biological people, women, scoring off biological people, men. Feminism for me is a movement to assert the interests of women as a sex. But more than this it is a means of releasing and communicating the understandings which that subordination holds in check. The movement for women's liberation is part of the creation of a society in which there are no forms of domination and this society cannot be separated from the process of its making.

Thus, originally in a key book for the British Women's Movement, *Beyond the Fragments* (Merlin Press, 1979), Sheila Rowbotham defined her feminism. It is probably as good a quick definition of socialist feminism as we are likely to get: optimistic, visionary and inevitably linked with socialism. For nearly 15 years, in a steady stream of books, articles, reviews and lectures, Rowbotham has been defining, recording and creating the socialist wing of British feminism. She speaks with an unusual authority: in a movement which conscientiously eschews stars, and is frequently reluctant even to acknowledge ability, she holds a place of real respect.

Some of her work has been published in book form, but a great deal more that she has written, noticeably on contemporary politics, has been published, if at all, in fairly arcane periodicals here and there. Anyone who has tried to research the history of women knows only too well how easily our pasts and our sense of connectedness are lost or destroyed. Since Rowbotham has been writing consistently and steadily from the very beginning of this round of the women's

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movement (about 1968/9), collecting her work together and having her, in the role of editor, write new material to locate and link the old, would seem a good idea.

Although the 40 pieces of writing in *Dreams and Dilemmas* are arranged schematically rather than strictly chronologically, the most exciting thing this collection does is to impart a real sense of historical movement and growth within British feminism. The first two sections in the collection consist of articles and poems written between 1968 and '82 as immediate responses to events on the Left broadly and the women's movement specifically. Although I was doing very different things from Rowbotham in the Seventies, I felt very strongly re-connected not just with the concerns and problems of that decade but with the language and imagery that we used then; and particularly the sense of urgency we all felt. Later in the collection she includes an essay describing and justifying the project of socialist feminist history. My sense of being strengthened and renewed by reading our own history proves the truth of what she says:

> The writing of our history is not just an individual venture, but a continuing social communication. Our history strengthens us in the present by connecting us to the lives of countless women. Threads and strands of long lost experience weave into the present . . . We are tracing the boundaries of oppression and the perpetual assertion of self against their confines, the erosion and encirclement, the shifts and tremors of new forms of resistance. We are heaving ourselves into history, clumsy with the heaviness of creation, stubborn and persistent in the pursuit of our lost selves.

For me these early sections were the most vital. Thereafter Rowbotham correctly turns her attentions to more general cultural dilemmas from the Seventies. In particular she explores the consequences of the feeling that there was a

> need (not confined to feminists) for a wider understanding of power relationships and hierarchy than was offered by current Marxist ideas. And with that came the realisation that we needed to resist not only the outer folds of power structures but their inner coils. For their hold over our lives through symbol, myth and archetype would not dissolve automatically with the other bondages even in the fierce heat of revolution. There had to be an inner psychological and spiritual contest along with the confrontation and transformation of external power.

In the authority of this perspective Rowbotham goes joyfully leaping off in any number of directions – including of course historical research and theory, but also poetry, political and structural analyses, and a sustained passion for forging links between feminism and other radical groupings. The problem here is not so much the diversity, which could be enriching, but simply the volume: although I read much of the book with warmth and enthusiasm I was flagging by the end – it is simply too long.

Rowbotham does write so well, and across such a breadth of moods and styles: beautiful, powerful images leap up unexpectedly here and there declaring that politics informed by passion can be made lovely and delightful. So often her sentences are fuelled by a controlled, disciplined but burning commitment to the belief that a renewal and combination of feminism and socialism do indeed have the power to transform both individuals and society. But despite all the goodies *Dreams and Dilemmas* is not altogether a successful book. Apart from being overlong, the pieces are in a way too modest, too specific. This was proper enough in their original context when the background and the issues were clear to the readers, but it is inadequate somehow to convey the flavour of the past. I was left with a nagging question in my mind about whether Rowbotham's enthusiasm, energy and knowledge could be imparted through this book to people who had not shared the experience of feminism in the 1970s. Nostalgia is agreeable, but times are hard and we have to ask for more than comfort and fond memories for ageing feminists like me. □

BIOGRAPHY
Godfrey Hodgson

A regular fellow

Tumultuous Years: The Presidency of Harry S. Truman 1949-1953
ROBERT J. DONOVAN *W. W. Norton* £13.95

He drank bourbon with the boys and played poker, yet he was known as a strict family man. He read history and played the piano, but when Paul Hume of the *Washington Post* panned his daughter's first concert, he sat down in the White House and wrote him a note. 'Some day I hope to meet you', wrote the President to the critic. 'When that happens you'll need a new nose, a lot of beefsteak for black eyes, and perhaps a supporter below!'

They called him 'the nicest man in the Senate', and the newsmen just loved it when he told the folks in the Midwest to stop raising corn and start raising hell. But the toughness was real. This was the man who gave the order to drop an atom bomb, not once but twice. The only man who has given that order in earnest . . .

Harry Truman was the apotheosis of the regular fellow, elevated by something close to chance to the most extraordinary responsibilities imaginable. When he learned of Roosevelt's death and his own accession to the presidency, he felt, he said later, as if the moon and all the stars had fallen on him. Yet he coped. The survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki might say he coped all too well.

The first volume of Robert Donovan's masterly biography, *Conflict and Crisis*, dealt with the four borrowed years that Truman spent in the White House after Roosevelt's death at the very beginning of his fourth term. It ended with Truman going to bed on election night, after a ham sandwich and a glass of buttermilk, facing what everyone from George Gallup to his mother-in-law told him must be certain defeat.

Tumultuous Years opens with Truman President at last in his own right. His second term had its moments of triumph. But as a whole it was a litany of disasters. The first term had coincided with the crisis of post-war Europe. The journeyman President was confronted by the real need to stave off starvation and economic collapse, and the perceived need to keep Stalin from moving into the vacuum left by the collapse of German, British and French power.

The beginning of the second term coincided precisely with the high tide of the revolution in China. Mukden fell to the Communists the day before the presidential election, and by ten days after the inauguration all China north of the Yangtze was in their hands. Truman's tribulations were directly or indirectly due to the revolution in Asia. Directly, because he was called upon to decide whether the United States would oppose Communism there. Indirectly, because it was 'the loss of China' that gave the Republican Right its weapon. They used it to launch perhaps the most savage attack on any American Administration, not excluding that which led to the abdication of Richard Nixon, one of the ringleaders of the lynch-mob in 1949-50.

Donovan, a former White House correspondent for the old *New York Herald Tribune* who has spent the last dozen years in research, tells the story economically and well. His chapters are short, and they succeed one another with the tragic sense of

The Secret Diplomacy of the Vietnam War
THE NEGOTIATING VOLUMES OF THE PENTAGON PAPERS
George C Herring, Editor
Published in book form for the first time and with extensive commentary, these documents cover 13 major peace contacts and initiatives that took place during the Johnson Presidency. They furnish a wealth of new information about matters ranging from the bombing pauses of 1965 and 1966 to the abortive peace initiative launched early in 1967 by the then Prime Minister Harold Wilson and Premier Kosygin.
August, 940 pp, £40.00

and new in paper:

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Richard H Immerman
301 pp, £8.50

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Joanna Russ
168 pp, cloth £12.70, paper £6.75

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impending doom.

Almost before Truman was inaugurated, Alger Hiss was indicted for perjury, and Dean Acheson was on the defensive. When Hiss was convicted a year later, Acheson declared, superbly but with suicidal folly, that he did not intend 'to turn my back on Alger Hiss'. By that time, NATO had been founded. China had fallen. The admirals had done their best to smash the new Pentagon. James Forrestal was on the brink of the crack-up that made him jump to his death from the Bethesda naval hospital. And the Russians had tested an atomic bomb.

In 1950 the ominous rhythm of events was even more insistent. Truman decided to build the hydrogen bomb, and in response to National Security Council paper 68 the defence budget tripled. In spite of his own knee-jerk anti-Communism, Truman found himself under fire from 'a pathological liar from Wisconsin': Joseph McCarthy. He was also almost assassinated by Puerto Rican nationalists. And on 24 June 1950 North Korea invaded South Korea.

The remaining two and a half years of the Truman presidency were overshadowed by the Korean conflict and by Truman's quarrel with the insubordinate proconsul, General Douglas MacArthur. In the end, Truman plucked up the courage to fire the general. There are those who argue that he should have done so long before. Donovan is not one of them. He inclines to the view that it was the decision to get rid of MacArthur that crippled the Truman presidency.

Donovan tells the story of these dangerous and fascinating years – the years when the walls of the prison we all now inhabit were built – with clarity and skill.

His writing, however, has the defects of its virtues. It is plain and spare to a fault. I would have read with pleasure rich portraits of the heroes, the villains and the victims: of the aloof and lofty Acheson, the swashbuckling MacArthur, of Hiss and McCarthy and Forrestal, the Hamlet, the Iago and the Lear of the piece.

Nor does Donovan deal conclusively with the historical cruxes if the period. Was Hiss a Communist? Could Truman have tamed the McCarthyite hysteria if he had handled it more firmly? Were the nuclear arms race and the rearmament of Western Europe – processes to which the world was firmly committed by the time Truman left office 30 years ago – in practice inevitable? If they were not, where does the blame for initiating them lie? Were Truman and Acheson right in assuming that Kim Il Sung in North Korea was a mere surrogate of Stalin, and that the Korean war was essentially a feint in a strategy for world conquest? Or was it an episode in the post-war confusion in Asia that was opportunistically exploited by Stalin and tragically misunderstood in the United States?

These are great questions. We live with their consequences, or with the consequences of the answers Harry Truman and his advisers gave them. Robert Donovan has written a fine book. Anyone who wants to understand the origins of the world we live in should read it. But he has not written the final answers to those questions. □

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LITERATURE
Stephen Brook

Higher chat

A Colder Eye: The Modern Irish Writers
HUGH KENNER *Allen Lane* £14.95

What? Another book on the Irish literary revival that circuitously led to International Modernism? Yes indeed, and the author is Hugh Kenner, who has already paid his critical dues to Modernism with three books on Joyce and two on Beckett. I began *A Colder Eye* warily. Irritation soon set in but before long it gave way to admiration.

For Kenner, the author of the magisterial *The Pound Era*, is so steeped in his subject that he disposes of the usual tools of exposition and criticism, and transforms scholarship into the Higher Chat. The book rambles, and each chapter within it rambles, as Kenner slyly dances around his theme, and it's this discursive quality that exasperates yet fascinates. The theme itself is elusive – how the revolution in literary language wrought by Modernism was initiated largely by writers whose relationship to literary English was, to put it mildly, vexed – so it's not surprising that Kenner has chosen to develop it obliquely, plucking threads from history, politics, literature and gossip, and slowly weaving them into a sort of coherence.

Right at the start Kenner tells the reader to be on guard. Irish men of letters, never shy when it comes to self-promotion or denigration of others, have strewn misinformation in the path of gullible scholars. Irish Facts, Kenner calls them, and he exposes a number of hilarious examples, only to offer an American Fact of his own when he states that the English pay 10 per cent VAT. This jaunty opening chapter, 'Warning', is studded with rumbustious Irishisms and parodies of Joyce, but fortunately Kenner soon settles down and puts aside his bag of tricks.

Despite his gusto and wit, this is not an easy book to read. Kenner's sentences are allusive and his convoluted prose style has to be thoroughly chewed. With each chapter he drops a stone into a well and observes the ripples. In one chapter he begins by showing us Yeats in 1916, experimenting with his version of Noh drama; he draws parallels with Yeats's 1926 poem 'Among School Children' before going on to give an irreverent account of the Easter Rising and the ensuing executions. Kenner pauses to see how Beckett, Joyce and O'Faolain spent the day of the Rising, and ruminates on pseudonyms before turning to Yeats's poetic development. The point of this tour is not to discuss the politics of 1916, but to place the full cultural implications of Yeats's mature style: his appropriation of Cowley's verse forms to fashion his own ceremonial verse, half Metaphysical, half Augustan.

The notion of appropriation is central to Kenner's view of Yeats. Over the years Yeats quietly memorialises Synge in his verse, until the playwright has been effectively mythologised. 'Easter 1916' includes the line 'I write it out in a verse', and that act of solemn versification did indeed enshrine the Easter Rising as no history book ever could. He even appropriated language itself, endowing certain words – cold, courtesy, intellect – with a resonance unshakably Yeatsian.

Decades earlier, Yeats, like his co-revivalists Synge and Lady Gregory, had had to define his relationship to Irish lore and language. Poor Yeats could never make up his mind how to spell Irish names in his long poems: Niam is also Niamh and Neave. Blame Lady Gregory, who contrived an 'Anglo-Irish' idiom that could be reeled out by the yard. Here's her Cuchulain chanting away: 'I will make my doings be spoken of among the great doings of heroes in their strength.' Kenner informs us: 'For decades it was the idiom of stock plays at the Abbey, where the irreverent gave marks for "PQ" (Peasant Quality).' Synge defended the verbal accuracy of the lilting language that his peasants so eloquently pour forth, but readily admitted that as realistic utterances they were implausible. It was the urban realist O'Casey who more convincingly transcribed 'talk that sang crazily'.

No, it was the exiled Joyce who wrought the great revolution. *Ulysses* mocks language, refashions it, rhetorically displaying 'the variousness and encyclopedic finality of a sacred book'. The Irish *Ulysses* ended an era of English fiction, but proved a hard act to follow, even for Joyce. *Finnegans Wake* 'is a multiplicity of voices being misapprehended by a collectivity of ears'. How does one make sense of a 'language' that not only conflates dozens of other languages but also incorporates bewildering allusions, puns, and every possibility for confusion? As Kenner impishly observes: 'Staring at words that have never existed before despite their availability to any pixilated typist, we permit them to prompt well-known locutions that aren't there at all, and the result of this we call "understanding".'

After his brief but brilliant chapter on the *Wake*, Kenner fades out with sketchy observations on the lesser writers of the Revival: Kavanagh, Austin Clarke, Flann O'Brien. His final chapter on Beckett is appropriately entitled 'The Terminator', but Beckett, as Kenner recognises, is too remote from the Revival to be more than a coda. Like Yeats, Beckett is Anglo-Irish; like Joyce, he has abjured his native country. He is rooted in Ireland, but no longer of it. As Kenner concedes, 'what goes on now in Ireland is a different story'. □

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Hooligan: A History of Respectable Fears

GEOFFREY PEARSON *Macmillan* £15 & £5.95

Do not be put off by the unwieldy subtitle of this highly entertaining, wonderfully readable piece of social history. This is a book to slap happily down on your stack of holiday reading fodder. What the subtitle intends to tell you is that Pearson documents, in a sequence of successive backward glances, what any age of respectable society thought of the present when comparing it with the past. The comparison was always bad news, the bootboys had always supplanted the bright, beamish youths of yesteryear, and the wicked immoralists had forever dragged the nation deeper into the dirt. Pearson is particularly good at pinning down what seems to be a 20-year rule in press announcements, there being a recurrent obsession with that length of time having passed since a golden age. But, as Pearson points out, every time you have a proper squint at what was up and about in the halcyon days, you find nothing but complaints that you can't walk down the street in safety etc. etc. without being coshed, bashed, mangled or mugged, unlike 20 years before, when, of course . . . .

Pearson's homework is admirable, his selection of snippets both witty and instructive (if pricey). Try these cries of outrage for size, and date them if you dare. All describe the young:

a) insubordination to parental authority, leading to insubordination to all authority is . . . very general
b) our young people have no idea of discipline or subordination
c) they are links which have fallen off the chain of society, which are going to decay and obstruct the whole machine
d) over the past 20 years or so, there has been a revulsion from authority and discipline
e) the adolescent has learned no definite moral standards from his parents, is contemptuous of the law, easily bored
f) gangs of young ruffians terrorise certain districts of the metropolis . . . provided with firearms.

The answer, in order: a) 1849 b) 1904 c) 1788 d) 1981 e) 1961 f) 1898. Time before time, Pearson adroitly leads the reader through the street violence that raised the hair like hackles on the most eminent heads. There is perhaps a little over-anxiety in his summary: that he has not provided the reader a ready-made culprit. As he effectively notes, if readers were expecting him to come up with the industrial revolution, there is no such simple scapegoat. But, as he rightly insists, the importance of his study is that it disposes of the misty myth of ancient tranquility.

Bill Greenwell

Art and Anarchism

FARQUHAR McLAY *Autonomy Press, 488 Great Western Road, Glasgow* 40p inc. postage

Most artists inspired by socialism have been motivated by libertarian and humanitarian ideals, and this pamphlet is a long overdue restatement of ideas originally outlined by artists like William Morris and social theorists such as Peter Kropotkin. McLay places his argument in the context of Thatcher's Britain, rather than simply harking back to the 19th century. He attacks those Marxists who have seen art solely as a class tool, expressing class interests, while simultaneously attacking socialist strategies that demand only 'the right to work'. Work shuts people off from all genuinely creative activity, so that an individual's role as a worker becomes his or her sole source of identity.

Under capitalism art has been driven out of work, while work itself has assumed forms which exclude any possibility of art. Humanity and creativity can be restored to society only by the abolition of work, and a precondition for the abolition of work is an end to the politics of workerism that characterise much of the Left and have resulted in the dead hand of socialist realism in art. This pamphlet is in the best tradition of socialist literature – cheaply produced, sprinkled with printing errors, but thoroughly absorbing in what it has to say.

Martyn Everett

The Constant Novelist

VIOLET POWELL *Heinemann* £10.95

Who on earth was Margaret Kennedy? Violet Powell tells us, and reminds some of us, that she was a once famous, popular writer, who published in 1924 a shocking novel for her time, *The Constant Nymph*. As Violet Powell comments, after a pedestrian ten-page condensation of the plot, it was 'a book in which mistresses, bastards, sexual abandonment and, almost, the seduction of a minor played leading parts'.

There is no doubt that Margaret Kennedy made her mark. She wrote 16 novels, and *The Constant Nymph* was made into a successful West End play with Gielgud succeeding Noel Coward in the lead. She was noticed by such literati as Cyril Connolly and Charles Morgan.

But the comet flared briefly, and Violet Powell rekindles only a dim flame. Few will seek out *Return I Dare Not* or *Troy Chimneys*. Her plot résumés are not the most attractive parts of this biography. Some of the details are far more fascinating. Ivy Compton-Burnett was a tyrant to her sister, Primrose. Aldous Huxley regarded Anglo-Saxon in the Oxford English course as 'a nauseous diet'. There is an amusing account of Freud's jealousy of Wilhelm Fleiss for the latter's theory of universal bisexuality. A lakeside walk during which Fleiss stumbled and fell into the water led Fleiss to charge Freud with pushing him: Freud countered by publicly accusing Fleiss of paranoia. We are introduced to the eccentric self-styled Count Potocki di Montalk with his flowing hair and crimson robes, stalked along Bloomsbury pavements by teasing children.

The charm of this biography lies in the details rather than the whole. Yet Violet Powell warns over-confident reviewers by describing how *The Fool of the Family* was noticed above Maugham's *Cakes and Ale:* how ephemeral, and often unsatisfactory, are our judgments!

Brian Martin

The Sacred Threshold: A Life of Rilke

J. F. HENDRY *Carcanet* £9.95

Rilke was at once the most preposterous and the most dazzling poet who ever lived, and it was his great achievement to transmute the first quality into the second. J. F. Hendry's new biography is a rather neutral medium for its subject, but it improves in measure as he did. However, chances are that Rilke would have been humbled by this slender book, with its posturing chapter headings, its mild opining that poems are 'lovely' or 'peculiar' (though never both) or that the rose is 'a key image in his writing'; above all, he suffers from its briskly Procrustean manner. The sentences have the weird and meaningless parity of popular biography: 'This increased mental activity was doubtless due both to reading Jacobsen and to conversations with Lou Andreas-Salome.' 'In the midst of this anonymity of suffering, Rilke could be certain only of the loneliness he hugged like a precious stone.' 'The sight of four Cézannes cheered him, as did the receipt of a friendly letter from Rodin.'

Rilke's life was one of an itinerant solitude. He was a professional guest, who turned female German aristocracy into his supporters' club. His methods, practically indistinguishable from a confidence trickster's, were to read up on the history of the great families of wherever he happened to be, and to 'provoke' invitations from them. At one time, his address book contained about 1,200 names. And yet, he was chronically and gravely averse to any form of human responsibility – beginning with his wife and daughter, whom he saw and provided for on an extremely irregular basis. (Subsequent woman friends could not imagine him married, or the father of a child.) He represented an extraordinary mixture of acute self-knowledge and a self-unawareness that bordered on shamelessness. As much is evident from his judgment on his young manhood: 'External circumstances are to blame for the fact that I was unable at that time to be either sincere or real.' The amazing thing is that, later, he was able to be both, as the many excerpts from his intelligent and sympathetic prose and letters show. In his twenties, he had written poems in Russian on the strength of two visits there, and on his return to Germany affected a peasant's blouse, a Russian-style beard and broken German. Subsequent charlatanism is rarer – either that, or the reader himself has been taken in by Rilke's majestic needs and projections!

Michael Hofmann

GOD CRIED

is a terrific book. Every Jew in the world should read it. So should everyone else who has any conscience at all.

ROALD DAHL

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THEATRE
Benedict Nightingale

A brusque snook

Tartuffe
MOLIERE *Pit*
Cyrano de Bergerac
ROSTAND *Barbican*
Happy Family
GILES COOPER *Duke of Yorks*

Cyrano de Bergerac – who lived at the same time as Molière, proclaimed that playwright a genius and (so Rostand, his creator, slyly suggests) was plagiarised by him – received rough punishment for his more scurrilous writings. His enemies hired a servant to drop a log on his head, and the bump killed him. The real-life reprisals inflicted on Molière for **Tartuffe** were rather subtler. The play was banned, then banned again, and only licensed by Louis XIV in a third version which ended, not entirely coincidentally, with the long rapturous tribute to the sun king's wisdom and humanity that even today every patriotic Frenchman can quote by heart. The pi were never reconciled to Molière, however; and, though they didn't succeed in having him burned as the more ferocious of them wanted, they can take much of the responsibility for the misery of his declining years and the obscurity of his burial.

In other words, *Tartuffe* drew blood, froth, pus, venom and just about everything else from those of its day who were over-apt to substitute sanctimonious profession for spiritual practice. Our own era is not altogether lacking in such hypocrisies, either; but I venture to suggest that, in the unlikely event of their perpetrators actually entering a theatre called the Pit, they will find little to offend them in Bill Alexander's bustling, bouncing production of the play. So insistent is it that Tartuffe is a fake, a charlatan, a con-man and crook, that it becomes an attack less on his self-serving conscience, more on his benefactor's lunatic credulity, less on religiosity, more on gullibility.

The instant impression you get from Antony Sher's grey smock, long black locks and white slanting eyes is of an economy-sized Rasputin; and it is reinforced when, not long afterwards, we find him staring, memerising, hypnotising the wretched Orgon into siding with him against his justly aggrieved son. There is something in him of the jungle animal, something of the goblin, something of the dybbuk. Surprised, he yelps and screeches. Sexually excited, he snorts and voluptuously gargles, as if readying his tongue, throat and stomach for the task of ingesting his prey. Irked, he somehow squeezes a brusque snook or an up-yours jab into the act of crossing himself. Exultant, he crackles, leaps, waves his arms above his head in a sort of victory dance. It is all very primitive and anarchic; yet that doesn't prevent a slimy-curate intonation or

Sher in *Tartuffe*

Wardour-Street gesture appearing from nowhere when Tartuffe wishes to impress a mark or befuddle his brains. The Mad Monk has, it seems, taken a course or two in PR.

It is a very busy, inventive performance. Give Sher a spare moment and he can be relied on to fill it with something startling: daubing jam on to his palms and thrusting out his arms in imitation of the crucified Christ, for instance, or surreptitiously removing those stigmata to give the impression of a miracle healing. Give him a rosary, as Alexander's production does, and it successively becomes a snare with which literally to entrap Orgon's wife, a noose and a whip with which to make spectacular gestures of humility and self-hatred, and a flail with which to terrify his triumphant enemies. Whirling those big brown beads round his head in maniacal rage, snarling and spitting like a cornered chimp, he *is* rather terrifying, too. As a result, it's more than a little bathetic when someone reacts, as the script says he must, with a pious 'let us hope this will encourage him to return to the paths of virtue'. One might as wisely have said, as the foaming, lacerated Rasputin disappeared under the ice for the third time, 'let's hope this will cool him down a little'.

There's no doubting Mr Sher's resourcefulness and energy, but it is, perhaps, permissible to wonder if his interpretation is altogether apt. Surely Tartuffe should not be so obvious, so out-front a scoundrel as this. Surely Sher should have asked himself some questions about the internal geography of sanctimony as well as about greed and ruthlessness and revenge. Take the line (one characteristic of Christopher Hampton's unobtrusively colloquial translation) he has to deliver when he's asked if it wouldn't be ethical to help the son Orgon plans to disinherit: 'I would do anything I could for him, but from God's point of view it's just not on.' In Mr Sher's mouth that's smooth patter, the sort you can hear over three-card tricks in Oxford Street, and it's taken by his questioner as such. But suppose he and we were made to wonder if Tartuffe meant it. Suppose Tartuffe were so gifted a cheat as actually to mean it, at least at the moment. The most interesting hypocrite is, after all, the one who believes his own lies.

Still, Mr Sher may reasonably argue that it would be inappropriate, as well as anachronistic, to put Tartuffe on the analyst's couch. After all, Molière dealt with humours rather than psyches, behaviour rather than motives, the outer rather than the inner; and, on that level at least, Bill Alexander's production brings its people ebulliently to life, procuring good, brisk, no-nonsense performances from Stephanie Fayerman, Alison Steadman and, above all, Nigel Hawthorne. It is always difficult to credit Orgon's obsession with Tartuffe, and doubly, trebly so here, given the glee and guilelessness of Sher's deceptions. But Mr Hawthorne, without exaggeration or embarrassment, presents us with a remarkably humane picture of a peppery, volatile man unself-knowingly in the grip of the love that dares not tell its name. He is besotted, disoriented, lost – and then suddenly, painfully found. If you want to see bravura acting, go and admire Sher; if you want to see feeling, intelligence and skill unobtrusively at work, go and enjoy that hardy perennial, Hawthorne.

OF COURSE, if you want all those things at once, you had better catch Derek Jacobi's **Cyrano** in the big playhouse upstairs. There can hardly be another actor living who can do such frankly silly things onstage – take on 100 armed assassins singlehandedly, persistently offer himself and his inordinate nose as target on the battlefield, self-sacrificially provide his rival in love with the words and rhymes to woo the adored Roxane – and somehow make us feel that he is a being of flesh and blood behaving in a perfectly plausible way. This is not to say that Mr Jacobi is insufficiently romantic. On the

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contrary, there are times when he becomes *too* romantic, or at least too much the sonorous spellbinder, enchanting his listeners with the variegated music of Anthony Burgess's translation rather than with its undoubted wit and sense. Yet, however dashing or extravagant he becomes, he never quite loses either a capacity for exasperation and anger, verging on biliousness, or a wry, rueful quality, verging on self-mockery; and the effect of both is to root Arthurian excess in terra firma. At one point D'Artagnan appears, to compliment Cyrano on outmusketeering the Musketeers. You wouldn't be surprised if Molière followed, to share scathing pleasantries with him about the true-life prototypes for Tartuffe.

The production is by Terry Hands, a director who loves exotic spectacle, lavish effects and a high population density onstage, yet has the taste and guile to subordinate them to the twin demands of life and art; and it shows him at his strongest. In fact, I don't look to see a better *Cyrano*. **Happy Family** is, I fear, a bit less rivetingly revived, though there are times when it comes close to being the definitive statement on the propensity of the English cosily, clubbily, snobbily to extend their childhood into middle age and beyond. Though well enough played by Ian Ogilvy, Angela Thorne and others, it seemed less tense and less funny, more predictable and repetitive than I remembered it 15 years ago. □

This is Benedict Nightingale's last NS theatre piece for a year or so, but we wish him well in the USA, where he is to contribute a weekly column to the New York Times. During his absence his column will be shared by several guest critics.

DANCE
Stephanie Jordan

Caprice

WHILE, inevitably, the Royal Ballet has changed with the times, Frederick Ashton, associated with the company from its earliest days, its most important choreographer, quite evidently remains very much in touch. His short new one-act ballet **Varii Capricci,** recently premièred in New York, now at the Royal Opera House, looks positively to the present while re-engaging points of style, even oblique quotations, from his past successes.

Fresh and deftly outrageous, the work is set to a recent score by Sir William Walton who died earlier this year, with scenery by David Hockney and costumes by Ossie Clark, featuring the revitalised and celebrated dancing partnership of Antoinette Sibley and Anthony Dowell. Its use of dog-Italianisms and its in-joke nature suggest that Ashton is being far from deadly serious. The ballet takes place within Hockney's primary-coloured Mediterranean view of the gardens and swimming pool of Walton's Ischia home and centres on the meeting of a seemingly ill-assorted couple and their ensuing *pas de deux:* Dowell in turnabout image as a racy, swivel-hipped gigolo intruder, Lo Straniero, ultimately self-seeking, of course, flashing sunglasses and black and reflective hair; Sibley, the elegant, glittering hostess, La Capricciosa, amid four boys and four girls like teenage house guests, Varii Amici, offsetting the black and white of the soloists with their brightly coloured cutaway flutters.

The principal duo presents dances that are framed, indulged and interrupted by the young people, then abruptly curtailed by Dowell's departure, except that he steps back on stage to recover his sunglasses left, possibly accidentally, with the hostess. He leaves her laughing at the presumption of his boyish sexual triumph – he shrugs – it's been nice, but sorry . . . This must be the contemporary inversion of the tortured parting of Natalya Petrovna and Belyayev at the end of Ashton's last big ballet of 1976, his version of Turgenev's *A Month in the Country*.

The art of this new caprice lies in the economy, wit and speed with which Ashton shifts between the overtly suggestive and the understated, between sultry southern languor and the piquancy and brilliance of tango glamour and cancan bravura. Hedonism is conspicuous, yet Ashton, as always, stops short of excess, defusing the image of the moment with humour and when least expected.

Dowell's sizzling solo diagonal switches into an exaggeratedly lubricious slow-motion swagger. Bliss and covert sexuality are hinted at in the skimming lifts across the stage, in Sibley's sparkling wrist-flicks or in the frisson of her quivering *pointes* as Dowell steals suddenly upon her from behind (all Ashton hallmarks recognisable from other earlier more important contexts). But Ashton never takes the couple seriously for long. A climax is Sibley's caress of Dowell's thigh with almost cold-blooded panache, his startled response, to smooth down his brilliantined coiffure with narcissistic candour. Suddenly the couple might halt and perform curious little bounces side by side. During a glorious crowning exit lift, Dowell mockingly cocks a leg into a complimentary *arabesque*.

The young friends are of the latest RB breed. Ashton has picked some of the brightest and he has accommodated their builds and style, now different from those which were, in former times, his raw material. RB training has changed emphasis and adapted to suit a younger generation of choreographers, but Ashton, without degrading the substance of his work, can use it effectively. Most striking is the handling of the four men, Phillip Broomhead, Stephen Sheriff, Mark Freeman and Douglas Howes, whose super-loose, high-extended capabilities, extraordinarily, manage to combine brashness with expression. They enter, arching backwards sumptuously or, after turning cavaliers to a temporarily deserted Sibley, they fill the stage with a firework display of leaps, a line of high kicks or, with the girls in tableau, holding their legs up past their ears.

That Sibley now returns regularly to us from retirement is cause for rejoicing. She possesses a true ballerina quality, a glittering presence and nobility of manner, which is unique in the present company and a great lesson for young recruits. Dowell in a raunchy guise hitherto unfamiliar to us, dances with zest and impeccable rhythm. Once again, they make a dynamic pair. □

FILMS
John Coleman

False trail

Runners (15)
Gate, Notting Hill
Out of the Picture and **Dial M for Murder**
(PG) *ICA*

Do look now, because one of the most preposterous entertainments since Nicolas Roeg's tiresome *Don't Look Now* has come to town. Scripted by Stephen Poliakoff and directed by Charles Sturridge, **Runners** is ostensibly about one thing (the obsessive search by a father for a missing daughter) but actually about others, high among them escape from marital boredom and provincial job-*ennui* into a scamper around a metropolis. London becomes a hummingly patrolled City of Dreadful Night and fairly appalling days, a place fit for – and lit for – fantasy. Taking a subject which might seem to be ideally tailored to the talents of a Ken Loach, Poliakoff and Sturridge have wittily and balefully turned it upside down, with an eye – one suspects – to the new main chance for British cinema: to show we have towns, landscapes, eccentric faces and places to match anything in the geographic and emotional breadth of movies from abroad.

In a performance that shifts to encompass the bottled-up rages and dormant humour of a Nottingham-based executive, James Fox starts off heavily and soberly enough as Tom, whose 11-year-old daughter Rachel (Kate Hardie) just vanished one day, her bike found abandoned on a road. Rapid shots establish him as cumulatively intent on finding her: he becomes an embarrassment to his wan wife (Eileen O'Brien), haunting Rachel's school, waking with night-sweats over ringing phones; and, suddenly, two years have passed. His persistence takes him – via a thoroughly eerie trip to a Coventry group of fellow-seekers, where he meets grand Helen (Jane Asher) who has 'lost' a son – to London and, memorably, to a room at the Grosvenor Hotel overlooking the concourse of Victoria station, with its population of derelicts, whores and junkies. A gentle disc-jockey reluctantly lets him broadcast a plea, when Tom cheats, giving his hotel address.

There follow incursions by ever-so-wayward girleens and an outright nutter. Meanwhile, Tom has been joined by Helen,

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on a last bid for her son; and he *does* meet long-lost Rachel, in a series of swift encounters and escapes which take in such chic if unlikely venues as the Burlington Arcade. The twist: found Rachel disappoints his wilder dreams of white slavery, Moonies. He rails: 'You're living in this normal house, doing this pathetic toy job' (the kid is handing out leaflets for a car-hire firm). But, of course, the invective at this anyway cipher of a child is irrelevant, though heavily ironic. Her reasons for quitting home ('to get a job') prove fudged and marginal. She's as unpresent in the event as Tom's wife – a little fugitive like that scarlet-garbed midget in *Don't Look Now*. What holds the attention throughout is the frieze of British phizzes (outrageous cameo by Bridget Mead as a naughty boarding-school lass) and the thaw of Tom, who has his wry night of lust with Helen, off – via a shop at Fortnum's – next day. A hot-house home-grown aberration, in the right direction.

The ICA is showing an impressive short demo of 3-D, Perry Hoberman's **Out of the Picture,** stepping and slanting slogans and jokes towards a viewer best unflurried by a potentially pretentious back-combing of meaning, together with Hitchcock's **Dial M for Murder,** a dull, talkative thriller further inclined to waxwork status by the master's experiment with another dimension. His chilly abuse of Grace Kelly inevitably chimes with one's sense of lack: time finally stopping for that larger maestro, Buñuel, another to manipulate glacial blondes. He manipulated us, too, as more time may prove, but – alas – became fashionable, the darling of his targets. □

ARCHITECTURE
Jules Lubbock

Bentleys and helicopters

I AM SOMETIMES asked by other architecture critics whether I enjoy any contemporary architecture. I reply that I like some buildings, but few by 'qualified' architects. I remind my questioner that 'qualified' architects have a pecuniary interest in the destruction of architecture and of communities, which they replace with eyesores that cause suffering and even death. I conclude that because most critics write as if they were in the pay of the professional body, the RIBA can so flaunt public opinion as to award the Royal Gold Medal to Norman Foster, against whom Milton Keynes have taken legal action, without waiting for the case to be decided, and can elect as President a Mr Manser who is so ignorant of the history of architecture as to claim that the great urban architecture of the 18th century was only possible because no planning regulations then existed, and to advocate their abolition.

I appreciate that in mature cities demolition is the easiest way for architects to earn the fees to pay for the Bentleys and helicopters, and I admit that there is a genuine dilemma here: unless society can invent a cheaper means of ferrying architects from one hole in the ground to another then it must pay the price in the progressive dehumanisation of its cities.

At this point a layman might concede that destruction is necessary, but still wonder why new buildings are so ghastly. After 30 man-hours trudging round the student exhibitions of a quarter of the country's architecture schools I can supply the answer. A 'qualified' architect is someone who has been taught to hate real architecture and to demolish as much of it as possible. He, or more rarely she, has also learnt to loathe decoration, to disregard the needs of tenants, workers and passers-by, and to manufacture plans, elevations and cross-sections which are unintelligible to them.

Above all, if you want to be an architect, you must not think. Years ago, when I was teaching art history at Manchester University, we had a student who was expelled from the school of architecture (Foster's alma mater) because, when required to design an old people's home, he asked whether old people liked to be housed in that way!

This persecution continues. I came across two major examples. The first was at the Architectural Association, the only independent fee-paying school with a reputation for arty boutique architecture. Nonetheless, one of its courses, Unit 10, has conducted a remarkable educational experiment on the premise that a building or urban setting should not be conceived as a machine for living and working in, for which the architect 'designs the set, writes the script and directs the actors', but as the physical space where autonomous social events take place. This entails the overthrow of plans and elevations. Instead students make objects, video films and freehand drawings. The exhibition was an environment of huge drawings hung like kites from the ceiling of a room littered with welded bits of old cars and surrealist objects, with video to communicate their scheme for Bermondsey, neither as a planner's utopia, nor a developer's goldmine, but as an infernal vision of the future city of Albion, part wasteland, part fairground, part jungle – the Metropolis of microtechnological unemployment with fully automated factories incorporating gymnasia. And it was failed, in toto, by James Sterling, the external examiner and supposedly one of the world's greatest architects, on the grounds that it didn't comply with RIBA rules, even though some fancy footwork later retrieved the failure.

Unit 10 is not above criticism. Doesn't the architect remain scriptwriter? Why weren't the people of Bermondsey involved? But it is an attempt to rethink architectural education, one which also restored a former mode of architectural visualisation, as when the designers of Florence Cathedral, who were not architects, presented their design to the citizens in a fresco of the allegory of salvation.

At South Bank Poly Glaspole Graham, Michael Kane and Colin Marshall, who live off the Railton Road, did something more remarkable – socially committed, well-researched and all their own work. They too spurned tidy plans and elevations in rethinking the centre of Brixton. They used photography to portray the events of the area – a telling shot of a police van beneath the railway bridge with its announcement that Marks and Spencer are 'Backing Brixton'. Each of them replanned an existing building to suggest means of breaking up the authority structure of the area. They passed, but did not get the mark I thought they deserved.

Since the system of training excludes lovers of architecture from the profession, it is apparent why it should be that the profession is incapable of reforming itself, or even seeing that there is a problem. Laymen – Alberti, Ruskin, Colin Ward – have always been the most imaginative and humane architectural thinkers, and the remedy must lie in their hands – among them those who are represented on the statutory educational and registratory board, ARCUK. □

ART
John Spurling

Fecundity

The British Neo-Romantics
Fischer Fine Art, until 19 August, then National Museum of Wales, Cardiff

British individualism has never lent itself happily to art movements. If you haven't heard of the British Neo-Romantics it's because they didn't really exist. The term (he only claimed it as a 'vague heading') was first used consistently by Robin Ironside in a book about British painting during the Second World War. This exhibition, organised jointly by the National Museum of Wales and Fischer Fine Art, extends the catchment period back to 1935 and on to 1950 and begins with a section devoted to prints by the founding fathers of the 'movement', William Blake and his disciples John Linnell, Edward Calvert and Samuel Palmer. Blake, of course, was a Neo-Classicist as well as a Romantic, but more than either a British individualist of daunting peculiarity. Setting up a movement in his wake is rather like trying to found a church in Christ's.

Certainly the influence of Blake's tiny Arcadian wood engravings for Virgil's *Pastorals* passed via Calvert and Palmer to a group of young etchers – William Larkins, Paul Drury, Robin Tanner and Graham Sutherland – at Goldsmiths' College in the 1920s, but from there on the connection is at best tenuous and intermittent and at worst misleading. Blake's and Palmer's mysticism was concerned with another and better world, whose perfection and tranquillity might be dimly apprehended in an idealised

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English landscape; the mysticism of 'Neo-Romantics' if we must call them that, was all of this world and concerned with the transference of the artist's emotion to the landscape.

That emotion was very often, blatantly or latently, sexual. British romantic landscape might be the art-historical tradition to which most of these artists belonged, but British sexual repression and the beginnings of a powerful revolt against it were what moved them to paint and draw as they did. You can't walk round this show thinking very coherently about Blake and Palmer or even about other less eccentric landscape artists of the early 19th century, but you can hardly walk round it without thinking of the romantic sexual subversives of the period before and after the Second War: the Surrealists, Cocteau, Henry Miller, Lawrence Durrell, Dylan Thomas.

This is what Henry Moore's earth mothers have in common with Sutherland's mysterious entrances, tree-stumps and breast-shaped hills, with Michael Ayrton's tangled garden and Charles Murray's extra-volcanic Iceland. In this light Ceri Richards' large canvas *The Cycle of Nature* (1944), in which Europa's bull seems to be rushing through the air trailing an amazing assemblage of testicles and vaginas, seed-pods, bunches of grapes, pricks and apertures, stands out as the central element of the exhibition. But if the heterosexuals provide the most rampant evidence of a shared preoccupation, the homosexuals are perhaps the more traditionally British, for their sexual theme is still camouflaged and oblique. John Minton's *Summer Landscape* (1945) in pen and ink has a pair of etiolated heterosexual lovers in the middle distance, but the main figure is an equivocally inviting boy holding a staff in the foreground and all the lines in the landscape curve and swoon in sympathy with him. Keith Vaughan's *Seligkeit* (1945) is at first sight a distinctly Blakean extravaganza of Milton mixed with Michelangelo, but the small figure crouched at the centre of its fiery vortex is wholly anti-heroic, a Beckettian image of uncompromising rejection and passivity.

There are, of course, many paintings here which are not concerned with sexual emotion. Victor Pasmore, William Scott and Prunella Clough, all better known for their later abstracts, are represented by early landscapes which are primarily responses to landscape as such – concerned, that's to say, with atmosphere, light, form and texture. John Piper's theatre-set view of Windsor Castle, done for the Queen Mother in 1941, is a Henry V-style piece of timely patriotism and his impressive post-war watercolours of mountains in Wales are a kind of patriotic homage at once to Beautiful Britain and to the great British watercolourists of the early 19th century who first discovered its romantic splendours. On the other hand, though David Jones was partly a religious mystic in the Blake/Palmer mould, he was also, like his master Eric Gill, a celebrator of natural fecundity. The catalogue tells us rather cryptically that Mary Fedden painted her *Fruit and Flowers*

Minton's *Summer Landscape*

(1946), with its libidinous lilies and emphasis on seeds, while listening 'with streaming eyes' to a reading of Jones's *In Parenthesis*.

The exhibition is too much dominated by Sutherland and is rather short of ambitious works, but it is nevertheless an adventurous and fascinating introduction to a whole warren of shy talents. It ought to be the prelude to a much larger and more comprehensive exhibition including Bacon and Freud (who declined to take part in this one) but also various post-1950 artists who, whether they can be usefully labelled Neo-Romantics or not, belong in this company if only because they have never found it possible to join any other. British Individualism, perhaps, has been a secret movement all along, as William Scott suggested when he called it scathingly 'the English watercolour nationalist romantic patriotic isolationist self-preservationist movement'. That covers a lot of it, but it still leaves out the sex. □

TELEVISION
Mary Harron

Self-portraits

IN **MOTIVES** (BBC-2), the series in which famous people submit to a psychiatrist's questions, John Stonehouse – the politician who faked his own death and ran off to Australia – was asked what he thought was his greatest flaw. 'I was too much of an idealist', was the considered reply. Dr Anthony Clare tried other angles and harder questions, but Stonehouse just sank deeper into his cardigan and his self-justifications glowed more brightly. Yes, he had been evasive, he had been weak – too weak to face up to his own goodness, too blind to the wickedness of the world. Basically, Stonehouse explained, it was all his mother's fault for inflicting her unrealistic socialist ideals on her growing son. Dr Clare looked troubled and Freud rotated in his grave: in the late 20th century, pop psychology has become the last refuge of the scoundrel.

A more honest family portrait emerged when Sheila Hancock talked to Bel Mooney in the admirable **Mothers By Daughters** (C4). Sheila presented this as a sunny relationship, marred by little disputes and a lasting regret that her mother – who like so many others adjusted her personality to the needs of her husband and children – 'didn't get enough mothering herself'. A touching picture evolved of a working-class housewife who submerged her own gaiety in family responsibilities, and who kept a rigid faith in clean shoes, spotless party frocks and her daughter's chances of getting on.

The appeal of this series is that the same emotions and problems strike a chord in women of all types and classes. A similar theme, of a woman projecting her own hopes and lost ambitions on to her daughter reappeared, tragically this time, in **Letters Home** (C4), the dramatisation of Sylvia Plath's letters to her mother. I approached this without enthusiasm, expecting a solemn fringe-theatre event which translated awkwardly to the screen. It was a stage play from start to finish, but it was all about close-ups, and those two faces were more effective than any number of flashy visuals could have been.

The play was based on the published letters collected by Sylvia's mother, Aurelia Plath; portrayed as a gaunt, anxious New Englander by June Brown. The production treated her kindly, but as only Sylvia's side of the correspondence was available you had to guess between the lines at what forms of loving pressure and manipulation were coming from home.

The early letters from college were brittle, strained and horribly anxious to please: 'Dear Mother, who I love more than anyone, you are listening to the busiest and happiest girl in the world . . .' Sylvia compulsively lists all her activities and achievements as if afraid she would be given a failing grade in life. To her brother, Sylvia's letters were harder on their mother, 'She is an abnormally altruistic person and we must fight against this like it was an incurable disease.' The love there was genuine but fraught; it became clear that Sylvia's first breakdown was due to fulfilling two sets of expectations, her mother's and her own violent ambition.

A description of Sylvia's first ball is too perfect, too cloyingly fairy-tale, but the tone becomes more convincing as the letters accelerate into panic. 'My courses are frightening, I can't keep up with them.' 'The core of life has fallen apart, no rest cure in an infirmary could cure what is in me' . . . signed 'your hollow girl, Sylvia'. After the trip to New York described in *The Bell Jar* she cries 'My mind will split open', and then 'Seriously, I'm overjoyed to have spent a month here.'

After the marriage to Ted Hughes we saw fear moving over Mrs Plath's face as Sylvia

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described her plans to be the perfect wife, exulting, 'I'm so glad Ted's book was published before mine.' The mother was watching the re-play of her own lost ambitions. At last we watched Sylvia (Anna Nygh, splendid) drowning in a freezing cold flat: no husband, no money, two children. Housework killed her, more than love. The last letters turned on her mother in hatred, she wouldn't come home. 'I can't run away now. I shall hear of Ted all my life: *his* success, *his* genius.' Her posthumous celebrity has permanently shadowed his: no suicide ever exacted such total revenge.

Macho (part of 'The Eleventh Hour' series on Channel Four), by the Chilean director Valeria Sarmiento, was a delicately effective dissection of Latin-American men, intercut with film-clips of warbling gauchos. The men puffed up before our eyes, tearfully romantic, glistening with their conquests, innocently vain. I felt genuinely sorry for one man who described how his wife humiliated him, until he told us what happened when she tried to leave. He murdered her. □

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2782 **Set by Naomi Marks**

A Beethoven reference in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (14th Edn.) suggests that a certain harmonic effect would be as out of place as 'But hist! I must dissemble!' in a play by Ibsen. Extracts, please, from a blood-and-thunder version of an Ibsen drama – or of any famous play, ancient or modern. Up to 150 words, by 19 August.

No 2779 **Set by F. R. Spofforth**

Verses against cricket.

Report **By Fat Jeff**

We now have the names and addresses of dozens of cricket-haters, which will be forwarded to the appropriate authorities. The winners will get nine quid apiece, small compensation for the dread retribution which will shortly be visited upon them.

There's a shifty bunch of shirkers hunched in floppy cotton hats
Round another with a paltry piece of plank,
While some bandy-legged berk as likes to brag to little brats
Runs up smartly rubbing reddle on his flank.

There are jumped up little jessies scattered all across the sward
With a rapt attentive gaze upon each face
(Though each charlie – more or less – is so exceptionally bored
He might just as well be standing out in space).

There's a fringe of tiny terrors round a sticky whitish line
Who are poised to pour in posses 'cross the field,
And old sports who snort of errors into goblets filled with wine
Bandy drunken judgments when a man's appealed.

There's a box of ageing prattlers paid to chunter into mikes
And add fatuous statistics on each wicket:
All these senile tittle-tattlers with attendant little tykes
Are the cretins who give credit-marks to cricket.

WILL BELLENGER

Most boring game at boring Public Schools,
the only game with Laws instead of Rules!
Compulsory for us, who longed to be
reading banned *Ulysses* beneath a tree!
Such boredom in the outfield! Who could tell
much difference from some outer ring of Hell?

And now the One Day Game, floodlit, by night,
players like dollymops* – a woeful sight –
a Disneyland Burlesque! Those out of luck
mocked from the wicket by that fucking duck!
Telly, trite Trueman, pompous, silly, serious,
all kinds of cricket are jolly deleterious!

GAVIN EWART

* A dollymop is, in old-fashioned slang, a prostitute or badly-dressed woman.

Cricket is the cruellest of games, taking
Husbands away from their families
Week-end after week-end. Condemning
Wives to isolation or to spending
Saturday afternoons in the pavilion
Spreading margarine on sliced bread
And chopping cucumbers.
One Saturday, in particular,
We prepared luncheon for thirty.
No word of thanks did we get,
Only scraps after the teams had eaten
And, subsequently,
Vociferous complaints that we were not ready
When an unexpected declaration
Brought them in ten minutes early
For tea.

JOHN SWEETMAN

FIRST PERSON

Anne Smith

Thinking about money

I'VE BEEN THINKING about money recently, an activity I am usually careful to avoid as it brings on pains in the head and feelings of inadequacy. The symptoms, of course, go back to my underprivileged childhood. My mother was obsessed with money, almost every neurosis she had was focused on it. She fretted and even occasionally took to her bed for the lack of it. As soon as she got it, she rose and spent it in all directions as quickly as possible, like a woman with six hands and 20 minutes to live.

Then she would start to fret again. Once when delirious with pneumonia she raved about her desperate need for a bank-book. I was 15 then and monumentally naive. I scraped together ten bob and went to see the bank manager. But when I got home with the fabulous bank-book, she had already been taken to hospital. So, as any member of the improvident working class would, I promptly returned to the bank, got my ten bob back – incidentally trying to spread a little bourgeois guilt around in the process by glaring at the counter-clerk with a 'too little, too late' self-righteousness – and hot-footed it to the nearest caff for an orgy of Pepsi and Players.

I was 21, researching my Ph.D. and living off a student grant, when I suddenly realised that I had enough money to live on comfortably. The proof was, that I was living comfortably. If I wanted to live at an even higher level I could always give private tuition in English to the benighted daughters of the bourgeoisie struggling to get O-levels for entry to private secretarial colleges or foreign finishing schools or wherever they go to prepare for the marriage market. It was a revelation to me – so much so that I can remember the time of day and the exact place in the street where it hit me.

Further revelations were to follow. One morning shortly afterwards when I'd gone home for the weekend my mother waxed ruefully philosophical: 'I suppose wi' a' this education you'll be a professor next, rollin' in money and no' wantin' to know your ain folk. When will you bring your Dad out o' the pit?' I surprised myself with the degree of horror with which I recoiled from the thought of becoming a professor. I told her I had no such worldly ambitions, that indeed I would be happy to continue at my present level for the rest of my days, or until the Tories shut down public libraries, whichever came first.

I did, however, agree that I had a duty, as the unmarried daughter on the shelf at 21 through over-education, to bring my father out of the pit. Unfortunately Fate, ever ready, as P. G. Wodehouse asserts, to clock you with the lead-filled sock right in the middle of your best-laid plans, intervened yet again. A damaged heart and pneumoconiosis forced my father to retire from the pit a year later.

Experience of money since then seems only to have confused me at a higher level. I mean, on the one hand I have been reading the heart-rending personal appeals to Roosevelt during the Depression. These letters were written by people to whom the loss of their independence was a kind of spiritual death, and they wrote to the Roosevelts as earlier generations had prayed to the Virgin. On the other hand I casually picked up another book in someone's bathroom, a very silly, populist production called *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?*, and read that every morning in life Roosevelt ate a whole chicken covered in white sauce for breakfast.

It took me back to the advice I once had from a minister whom I consulted about someone else's problem. 'Do what you can, but don't put your hand in your pocket' was the advice, and it was meant to apply in a general way. The way I felt then is the way I feel now about MPs' salary-raises versus cuts in the NHS. □

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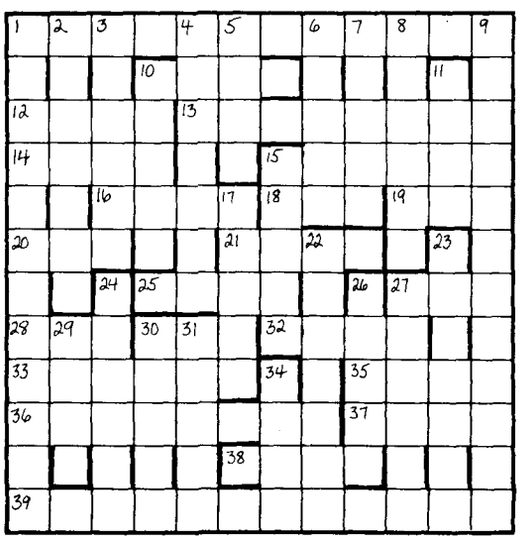

The 11 unclued words all appear in Chambers 1977 Edition.

Name_____

Address_____

_____

_____

ACROSS

1 Roaming a street, a cow, soliciting, I? (Could have been) (12)
10 Bird giving you thanks? You must be joking! (4)
12 One having to work hard in short, in return getting something small (4)
13 Capital (this is possibly turning back arrival) (8)
14 College head present no longer (4)
15 Writer – an important person in prison? (6)
19 English Lord of antiquity (3)
21 Patch up two electrical outputs (4)
25 Court hearing from solicitor, say (not beak?) (4)
32 He might be some gusla virtuoso (4)
33 He'll try hard *not* to damage the country? (6)
35 Saint – he's especially a Bible character (4)
36 Reluctant and sorry Prince becoming King (8)
37 Shank needs this part (4)
38 Computer spare parts? (4)
39 NY lad, eke, o' ode? Perhaps (12)

DOWN

1 Hoisting gear on railway with a 500 horsepower winder possibly (12)
2 Stopped short a doctor to be, perhaps (7)
3 Of attention, wandering? Not a foot! (6)
4 Pupil entering time-accepted town without uttering a word (7)
8 Won by effort – like the Ashes, we hear? (6)
9 What's produced in oceanic ooze – hard shore, half pebbly, possibly (12)
10 He'll take cut in transactions? (5)
11 Electric fluid visibly running into light leads (4)
15 Encyclopaedia in two-volume sets, say? (So it seems) (5)
22 Cross-breed dog you see leashed on ring (7)
23 Soften one, touching nerve (7)
24 Molten tonnes of rock (6)
26 These screens finish blank in the greater part (5)
29 Like some Arctic edifice (4)
30 Entered twice, getting bottom mark (not pencilled) (2 words, 5)
31 Do get into tangle that's rather fantastic (5)
34 Children's writer produced odd piece – I'm enthralled (4)

Solution to Salamanca 70

M	O	U	T	H	F	U	L	S	A	K	E
O	V	A	R	E	R	R	S	E	P	S	S
T	E	D	E	N	A	U	N	R	E	S	T
H	Y	A	E	N	A	S	A	P	P	L	E
E	G	M	I	S	T	A	K	E	E	V	E
R	O	E	T	E	A	S	E	N	L	D	M
P	D	A	R	T	P	T	I	T	F	E	R
L	A	T	E	T	S	O	N	A	B	L	E
I	D	E	A	L	U	P	B	R	A	I	D
G	A	R	D	E	N	G	I	M	A	G	O
H	T	O	L	D	U	A	T	E	L	H	N
T	A	K	E	A	P	P	E	T	I	T	E

Prizewinners to Salamanca 70
Mr J. R. Beresford (Bishops Stortford)
B. J. Cochrane (Christchurch, NZ)
P. Norman (Brighton)

Solution to 1408

S	H	E	L	D	U	C	K		S	T	I	F	F	S
E		R		R		U				A		A		T
C	O	N	T	O	U	R	S		G	R	A	N	T	A
U		E		M		M		B		K		L		G
R	O	S	I	E		U	N	L	O	A	D	I	N	G
E		T		D		D		O				G		E
			H	A	N	G	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R
S		C		R		E		D		M		T		S
C	O	L	L	Y	W	O	B	B	L	E	S			
R		U				N		R		R		P		B
I	M	B	R	O	G	L	I	O		G	L	A	D	E
M		F		W		Y		T		E		P		G
P	R	O	F	I	T		T	H	I	N	K	I	N	G
E		O		N				E		C		S		E
D	O	T	A	G	E		A	R	R	E	S	T	E	D

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LISTINGS

SAT 6 AUGUST

LIVERPOOL Solemn Procession in commemoration of Hiroshima. **Details: Merseyside CND c/o Unity, Hope Place, Liverpool 1. 051-709 4988.**

LOUGHBOROUGH Hiroshima Day Anniversary Silent Vigil in Churchgate 2pm. Peace Picnic in Southfields Park from 2.30pm. **Details: Loughborough CND, 20 Forest Road, Loughborough, Leics. 0602 218150.**

LONDON Hiroshima day of Remembrance – day long programme of events. 12-6pm Covent Garden Piazza. Poetry Theatre and readings from James Cameron, Bob Cryer, Ivor Cutler, Adrian Mitchell, Roger Woddis. 7.30pm St. James's Church, 197 Piccadilly, W1. Hiroshima Day Concert for CND. Bach, Vivaldi, Mozart and 3 commissioned works by Eric Boat, Oliver Knussen and Colin Matthews. Adm £3/£2 in gallery/£1 unwaged (in gallery). **Tickets from CND shop, 227 Seven Sisters Rd, N4. 01-263 5673 or by post from London CND, 6 Endsleigh St, WC1.**

DUNDEE Hiroshima Day March and Rally. **Details: Scott Wilson, Dundee CND, 78 Bridge St, St Andrews, Fife.**

CAMDEN Commemorate Hiroshima Day 12-1pm at the Peace Cherry Tree, Tavistock Square, WC1. Spkrs incl Lord Fenner Brockway and exhibition. **Org Hampstead Group, Camden CND.**

SUN 7 AUGUST

LONDON Sponsored Walk 'Save the GLC' 10.30am. Assemble outside Trades Hall, Bruce Grove, Tottenham, N17. Walk to County Hall. **Org Bruce Grove Branch, Tottenham Labour Party. Sponsor forms/info Roger Harris 01-801 4951.**

CLISSOLD PARK Anti-Nuclear Festival 12-6pm. Exhibitions, stalls, solar technology, music. Adm. Free. **Org Hackney & Islington CND, FOE, Ecology Party. Details: Patrick 01-629 2813.**

KINGSBURY Peace Picnic 2-6pm Silver Jubilee Park, Townsend Lane. Music by No Biscuits, Speed 45, SLOB, Walk in the Desert. Entertainment, Refreshments. **Org Golders Green and Hendon CND. Details 01-205 7582.**

LONDON Benefit by Members of Equity for Nuclear Disarmament in aid of Autumn Festival and CND October Rally. 7.30pm Phoenix Theatre, Charing X Road, WC2. Theatre (incl Nat. Theatre of Brent), poetry (incl Adrian Mitchell) music, comedy. Tickets at door and from **MEND 01-359 4202.**

MON 8 AUG

LONDON 'The Way of How' – George Coates Performance Works. Part of London International Festival of Theatre 1983. 8pm nightly (except Sun) until 17 Aug. **Tickets £5 from Bloomsbury Theatre, Gordon Street, WC1 01-387 9629.**

THURS 11 AUG

LONDON Stop the Invasion! Imperialism out of Central America. Spkr Phil Murphy 7.30pm Holborn Library, Theobalds Rd, WC1. **Org Revolutionary Communist Party 01-274 3951.**

LONDON 'African Philosophy Today' Prof Paulin Hountondji. 6.30pm at Africa Centre, 38 King St. Adm 50p/membs free.

SAT 13 AUG

SHEFFIELD Labour Women's History – Labour Heritage Research Committee into Women's Affairs meeting 2.15pm Transport House, Sheffield. Talk on Women's Labour League. **Details Christine Collette 0793 750863.**

IRISH FREEDOM MOVEMENT NATIONAL DAY OF PROTEST – street meetings, street theatre. **Details: BM RCP London, WC1. 01-274 3951.**

LONDON Hammersmith, Camden Town, Kilburn Sq., Brixton Underground stns 11am.

BIRMINGHAM Chamberlain Square, City Centre 11am.

COVENTRY GPO, Hertford St, City Centre 12 noon.

LEEDS Dortmund Sq, City Centre 11am.

SHEFFIELD Peace Gardens, Town Hall 11am.

MANCHESTER Old Town Hall steps, Ashton Mkt 11.30am.

FORTHCOMING

20 AUGUST Leicester Disarming Arguments – a day workshop on improving techniques of debate and discourse against the bomb, 9.30-5.30pm Students' Union Building, University of Leicester. Adm £1/50p unwaged. **Details Leicester CND, 35 Friar Lane, Leicester 0533-57228.**

27 AUGUST Porton Down. Picnic celebration of Life. **Contact Porton Down Action Group, Box 100, c/o 143 Charing Cross Road, London WC2. 01-734 2691.**

3-10 SEPT London Festival for Peace and Freedom in Latin America. Sat 3rd Purcell Room 2.30-5pm Daniel Viglietti and others. Royal Festival Hall 7.30pm Inti Illimani, John Williams. Box Office 01-928 3191. Sun 4th Cuban Ballet, London Contemporary Dance, Holly Near. Bloomsbury Theatre 7.30pm Tickets £4 Box Office 01-387 9629. 5th-9th National Film Theatre. 10 separate screenings of progressive Latin American films incl *Battle of Chile* Box Office 01-928 3232. Fri 9th Caribbean Night at ULU, Malet St, 7pm Calypso, poems, Reggae. Tickets £2.50 01-272 4298. Sat 10th. All-Day Festival films, theatre, video, mime, painting, singers from El Salvador and Nicaragua, lots for children. £2/£1 unwaged at Imperial College. **Details CSC 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7. 01-272 4298.**

4 SEPT London Holly Near performs for Chile at Her Majesty's Theatre, Haymarket. (7th Sept Town Hall, Leeds, 8th Sept Guild Hall, Cambridge.) **Details Bill McClellan 01-272 4298.**

9-11 SEPT Brighton CND Skill Sharing Weekend workshop, Lansdowne Centre. Creche, overnight accom available. £8/£5 unwaged. **Details: Delia Warnes, Basement Flat, 22 Gladstone Pl, Brighton 0273 672545.**

9-11 SEPT Oxford Weekend Workshop of Adlerian Soc. of Great Britain 'Life Tasks for 1984' at St. Hilda's College. **Details: 11 Osborne House, 414 Wimbledon Park Rd, SW19 6PW. 01-789 8086.**

11 SEPT Clerkenwell Green 1pm Demonstration by Chile Solidarity Campaign – part of Festival for Peace in Latin America. **Details CSC 01-272 4298.**

17-18 SEPT Glasgow Working Conference called by Polish Solidarity Committee to discuss 'Democratic forms of social organisation in Czechoslovakia 1968 and Poland 1980-81; The peace movements in Eastern Europe; 'Situation of women in Eastern Europe'; Developing solidarity with the people of Eastern Europe'. **Details Gordon Morgan, 59 Durward Ave, Glasgow G41 041-649 8958.**

18 SEPT London 'Leg it against the bomb' 10 mile sponsored slog for CND around Hyde Park from 11am at Holland Park. 4pm-5pm decorated legs comp. Find sponsors. **Forms available from CND, 11 Goodwin St, N4 3HQ. Carol Freeman 01-263 0977.**

22 SEPT London 'Sexuality and Self-Identity in Feminist Politics: Past and Present' first of 24-week course. 6.30pm at 42 Queen Square, WC1. Tutors: Sally Alexander and Barbara Taylor. **Details 01-828 3735.**

23-25 SEPT Bristol 'Politics and the Locality' *Wkend Conf.* **Org Dept of Extra-Mural Studies University of Bristol in assoc with The Politics Assoc.**

23-25 SEPT Keele '14-18: The New Vocationalism in School and Further Education'. ATSS Annual Conf at The University of Keele, Staffs. **Details: D. Glasson 0782 621111 Extn 299. Org Assoc for the Teaching of Social Science.**

24 SEPT Leicester 'Childbirth Today' Michel Odent – pioneer of active birth in France. 10-12.30pm £5. **Org Leicester Active Birth Conf, 9 Cross Green, Rothley, Leicester. 0533 374285. ALSO 3pm at Ivanhoe College, Ashby.**

29 OCT Oxford 'Artful Theology: a Feminist Recreation of Christian Tradition' at Old Fire Station, George St. Women Only. 10am onwards. Spkrs incl Sara Maitland, Julia Brosnan, Anne Parsons. Dscn. Exhibition, Events, Bkstall. Creche on demand. Wheelchair access and toilets. Disabled sisters please contact in advance. £3/£2 unwaged. **Details: Anne Parsons, 29 Hurst St, Oxford OX4 1HA Patricia Duncker 0865 727426.**

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THEATRE GOERS please note: cc = Credit cards; S = Student standby.

Meetings

JYOTI BASU, Chief Minister of West Bengal, will address INDIA LEAGUE members and friends, Sunday 7 August, 6.30 p.m., at Mahatma Gandhi Hall, (Indian YMCA), Fitzroy Square, London W1. Julius Silverman will preside. Speakers include The Indian High Commissioner and Dr K. S. Shelvanker, former Indian Ambassador in Moscow. For further information ring 01-353 9091.

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